

APRIL, 1925

# The SMART SET

Edited by  
George Jean Nathan  
and  
H.L. Mencken.



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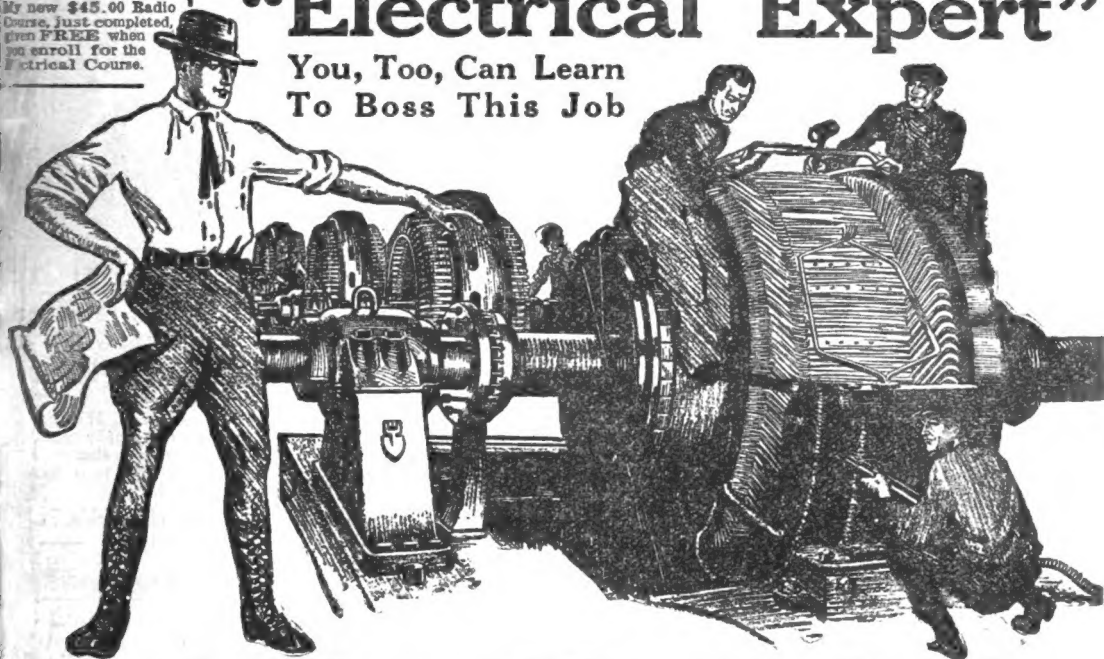
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Vol. LXXII

SMART SET for JUNE, 1923

No. 1

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# Contents

THE LAST OF SUNSET . . . . .	George Sterling . . . . .	5
AN INCIDENT OF THE COSMOS . . . . .	Paul Y. Anderson . . . . .	6
ORPHANT ANNIE ( <i>a complete novelette</i> ) . . . . .	Thyra Samter Winslow . . . . .	7
THE PRIME MINISTER OF SPAIN . . . . .	Robert Allison . . . . .	27
THE DREAM . . . . .	Victor Thaddeus . . . . .	30
RÉPÉTITION GÉNÉRALE . . . . .	George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken . . . . .	31
CREATION . . . . .	Roda Roda . . . . .	40
HURRICANE NIGHT . . . . .	John McClure . . . . .	40
HIS LAST APPEARANCE . . . . .	Gordon Seagrove . . . . .	41
IN MY OPINION . . . . .	Amanda Benjamin Hall . . . . .	49
ARTFUL AMERICA . . . . .	Ben Ray Rodman . . . . .	50
COUSIN EDGAR . . . . .	Ford Douglas . . . . .	53
STUFFED PEACOCKS . . . . .	Emily Clark . . . . .	66
11:30 TO 3:00 . . . . .	Charles G. Shaw . . . . .	69
GILBERT BECOMES CLEVER . . . . .	Donald Barr . . . . .	80
EXCUSES . . . . .	Robert de Ward . . . . .	82
CHILDREN . . . . .	Oscar Graeve . . . . .	83
BEFORE THE MUSIC LESSON . . . . .	Helen Woljeska . . . . .	91
THE HIGHER LEARNING IN AMERICA (XV) . . . . .	Paul Gangelin . . . . .	93
CONFLICTING EMOTIONS . . . . .	Charles Divine . . . . .	99
AMERICANA . . . . .	Major Owen Hatteras . . . . .	101
HELOISE HAS A HEART . . . . .	Margaret Widdemer . . . . .	103
SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST . . . . .	George Rodier Hyde . . . . .	116
LOAN EXHIBIT . . . . .	S. N. Behrman and J. K. Nicholson . . . . .	119
ART AT 8:30 . . . . .	George Jean Nathan . . . . .	129
NOTICES OF BOOKS . . . . .	H. L. Mencken . . . . .	136

*And Various Burlesques, Epigrams, Poems, Short Stories, Etc.*

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# What Is a Bootlegger?

HE is nothing but a common lawbreaker who exacts unreasonable prices from the public because of the chances he takes. But how many of us are almost as bad? We daily break the laws of Nature and think nothing of the terrible chances or consequences.

## Do You Know the Law?

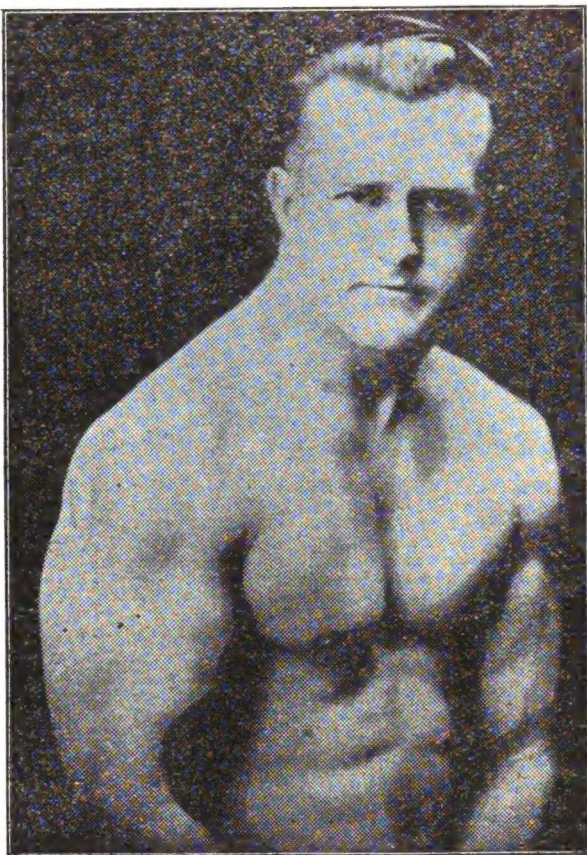
To look at the average man you would swear he never knew the laws of Nature or else he is just plumb crazy. He goes on stuffing any kind of food into his stomach till it sticks out like a loose meal sack, while his chest looks so flat you would think a steam roller had run over it. He stays out most of the night and then abuses his body most of the day. He never gives his lungs half a chance while his arms swing like pieces of rope with knots on the end.

## Freedom

Cut it out, fellows. Get wise to yourself. If Adam had looked like some of you, Eve would have fed him poison ivy instead of apples. This foolishness will never get you anywhere but the graveyard. Get back to Nature's laws and be a real He-man. Pull in your belt and throw out your chest. Give your lungs a treat with that good pure oxygen that is all about you and you will get a better kick than you could get out of a whole case of whiskey.

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"In Woman and the New Race" she shows how woman can and will rise above the forces that, in too many cases, have ruined her beauty through the ages—that still drag her down today—that wreck her mental and physical strength—that disqualify her for society, for self-improvement—that finally shut her out from the thing she cherishes most: her husband's love.

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\*Continence—Is It Practicable or Desirable?

\*Are Preventive Means Certain?

\*Contraceptives or Abortion?  
Women and the New Morality.  
Legislating Woman's Morals.  
Why Not Birth Control Clinics in America?  
Progress We Have Made.

\*Any one of these chapters alone is worth many times the price of the book.

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JUNE, 1923

No. 2

*The*  
**SMART SET**  
*The*  
*Aristocrat*  
*Among*  
*Magazines*

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no. 2



## The Last of Sunset

*By George Sterling*

THE moon-dawn, breaking on the eastern height  
Washes in silver the forsaken shore;  
Between the day and dark the sea-gulls soar,  
And on the sands the foam is ghostly white.  
Arcturus burns, the key-star of the night,  
And swept by winds that never blew before  
The harp-chords of the ocean flash and roar,  
And seaward now sinks Venus' golden light.

Alone, I watch her beautiful unrest—  
The shuddering of her topaz on the west,  
As heaven and earth accept the twilight hush,  
Far fallen on the violascent seas,  
Where ocean gods awhile to sunset crush  
The scarlet grapes of the Hesperides.

# An Incident of the Cosmos

*By Paul Y. Anderson*

## I

THREE famous men sat together—a physicist, a pathologist, a philosopher. A remote star twinkled through the window pane. The physicist, rugged, red-haired, brusque, lifted a cloth and disclosed a machine of simple appearance with a glass vacuum tube and an electric switch.

"I," he said, "have perfected a device for liberating and controlling atomic energy. From a single cubic inch of air sufficient power may be derived to perform the labor of London for a month. At last mankind is emancipated from the curse of labor."

"I," said the pathologist, elderly, ascetic and gentle, "have developed a standard serum which confers immunity to all diseases, together with a formula for arresting physical decay. Save for accident, man is redeemed forever from the curse of death."

"Life," declared the philosopher, a black-bearded colossus, agleam with intellectual ferocity, "can be justified only by the pursuit of truth. I have found the one truth, which is that truth cannot be found, because there is no means of identifying it."

## II

MANY blocks away from the University, the colored lights glowed upon the swaying forms of dancers. A saxophone wailed, a drum thudded in monotone, and a girl with black hair and flushed cheeks asked her companions where they had hidden the gin. In a squalid hall room a woman drank three ounces of carbolic acid, and fell with a gurgling scream. A banker, donning

silk pajamas, smiled as he reflected that on the morrow he would make ten thousand dollars by calling an old schoolmate's note. A youth with tremulous lips kissed a girl to seal their engagement; she sighed tenderly, and wondered if he would make as much money as she believed he could.

## III

THE philosopher stood brooding over the physicist's machine, his right hand touching the vacuum tube, his left near the switch.

"Yes," repeated the physicist, "we have mastered infinite forces. If that tube were smashed, and this switch thrown, the earth would dissolve into electronic dust in approximately one five-thousandth of a second."

"In me," muttered the philosopher, his eyes burning, "man attains the absolute idea. In me, he achieves the absolute act of will!"

## IV

IN a vast dwelling located upon an eminence of an outer planet in the solar system of Betelgeuse, a being of enormous stature, with a head as big as a piano, was looking through a telescope, the upper end of which was lost in the clouds.

"I was observing," he remarked to a similar being, "a slight disturbance on the fringe of the Minor Area in the adjoining universe. The third concentric satellite of Solar Unit No. 19288X appears to have exploded."

"Has it any particular significance?" she asked, idly.

"Oh, no. It happens about four times a week. How about supper?"

G. L  
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# Orphant Annie

(A Complete Novelette)

By Thyra Samter Winslow

(Author of "Picture Frames")

## CHAPTER I

**Y**ESTERDAY, for the first time in perhaps, yes, at least five years, I saw Annie Robinson. Seeing her startled me just a little. It brought back so many things, mostly about Annie herself.

Strangely, Annie had not changed in the five years since I last saw her, nor, for that matter, was she in any outward way different from the Annie of five years before that, when I first met her. Somehow, when we see old friends, after a space of years, we expect to see upon them some definite signs of disintegration and decay, even while each of us says to himself, "I haven't gone down like that—why, I've hardly changed at all—in years."

Perhaps there were signs of age in Annie that I did not observe, but the usual signs were missing. There were no sagging of throat muscles, or lines around the eyes, or loosening of contour. She was, so far as I could tell, the same Orphant Annie of Rutgers & Olds, Advertising; Bingham & Son, Brokers—the others.

"How are you, Annie?" I asked. "What have you been doing?" The usual questions.

She was quite well, she told me. Yes, she was still working—had an awfully good position—confidential secretary to S. B. Hubbard of the S. B. Hubbard Company. Yes, her family was well. Did I remember Ethel, her sister? Ethel was married—an awfully nice chap—they were housekeeping—an

apartment in West Seventy-eighth Street. Lester was married, too. Yes, thank you, her father was better—he always felt better when warm weather came. The family was living on Long Island, now. Yes, they were buying a home in Flushing—liked it there, awfully well—the country air was good for her mother, too. Yes, it was pleasant, after all these years. . . .

Looking at Orphant Annie, and later, thinking about her, after we parted, her story came back to me, much as stories often come back to us, pieced out, a patchquilt of information and hints and intuitions. Paths cross and break, a stranger, here, offers his bit of color, an old acquaintance, two months later, fits in a missing pattern. Annie . . .

She was nicknamed Orphant Annie when I first met her, at Rutgers & Olds. I've no idea that the nickname stuck to her nor that anyone else remembers it. She was named, perhaps, because of the old jest—that she was not an orphan. At that, she had supposed orphan-like attributes. She was, as she is now, a little thing, slender, with grey eyes set wide apart. Although she is, in a way, even plump, because she is small-boned she has always given the impression of extreme fragility. She was, and is, pale, too, though her mouth is full and ripe-looking. Her face is a bit broad, her cheek-bones a trifle high for artistic perfection. Her skin is smooth and delicate-looking and her hair an unnoticeable light brown and straight. Her nose is slender and straight, with just a suspicion of a tilt

to it, and, though her hips and waist are slender, her breasts are well rounded.

I wonder if I have given you a complete enough description. Perhaps her greatest characteristic is that, when you first meet her, she seems to fade completely into her background. It is only after you have seen her often, a dozen times, that she becomes complete, a person. Her clothes, of the most modest type, her soft voice, her little air of self-depreciation, all add to her neutral qualities, on first acquaintance. She is the type of whom it is so natural to say,

"Don't mind Miss Robinson, my confidential secretary, you know; say what you like in front of her—"

One, then, does ignore Annie, quite logically, at first. It is only at subsequent meetings that Annie's personality unfolds, that she becomes even Orphant Annie—Orphant Annie of a tenement in Sixteenth Street, an apartment uptown, now, a home in Flushing, Long Island. Orphant Annie—the perfect flower of our best urban civilization.

## CHAPTER II

ANNIE ROBINSON was born in Tenth Street. She never remembered the house in which she was born, but it is safe to say that it was much like those which became subsequently her homes. By the time she was fourteen and began to think seriously about things, the family had progressed uptown as far as West Sixteenth Street. The house she lived in, which resembled every other house in which Annie had ever lived in, except in street number, was of dingy red brick, called, by courtesy, an apartment house. The difference between it and a tenement was, perhaps, an almost imperceptible degree of cleanliness, an attempt at janitor service, an every-third year papering and painting. The house was one of a long row of four-storied houses, which, in a previous, more prosperous era, had been "private homes," each house being occupied, unbelievable to the present tenants, by a single family. Now, each house was divided and subdivided, made over into

apartments by the additions of kitchens, hall toilets and running water on each floor. Each floor was given over to one or two families, depending upon the comparative opulence of the occupants.

The first floor fronts had not been remodeled. Each house still had a neat bay window to the left of the once-white stone steps. Now, each bay window inevitably gave signs of a more commercial tenancy than the original dwellers could ever have dreamed of. Dingy hair-dying establishments, doubtful beauty parlors, doctors of little-known but vaguely unpleasant diseases were sandwiched between purveyors of imitation pearls and of other wares far less genuine.

Children were always tumbling out of the doors of these houses or getting under the feet of pedestrians. They were well-nourished children, their paleness due more to over than to under-feeding. They were always dressed in rather thick, unfitting clothes with soiled neckbands. Their stockings were forever coming down, their hair rough, their noses unpleasantly moist. They were usually sucking too-red lolly-pops or hinting for pennies for a new supply. They were sometimes accompanied by dogs of spiritless disposition and uncertain breed which ran mostly to short grey hair, occasionally black spotted.

This, then, was the atmosphere in which Annie Robinson lived until and when she was fourteen. Her own family lived in the third floor front of one of the red houses. The family had three rooms. The front room, logically called "the front room," was the living-room and served as a bedroom for the two daughters, Annie and Ethel, who slept together on the wide cot which served, day times, disguised with a rather dirty half of a pair of portieres, as a couch. There was a big red-plush rocker in the room, outlined elaborately with machine carving, three smaller chairs of lesser beauty, a big golden oak table with carved legs and, in the corner, a sort of what-not, a bit wobbly, bought, second-hand a few

years before and containing various art treasure: an enormous shell, a doll from Coney Island, a small set of dishes with handle-less cups and a book of Whittier's poems, mysteriously come by. There was a red rug in the room, violently patterned in spots but worn in other places to a softer gentility, torn, near the door, where you were apt to get your foot caught, if you happened to forget it.

The second room, opening off this, with the other half of the pair of portieres ready to provide privacy, if ever necessary, was the bedroom of Mr. and Mrs. Robinson. The furniture here was, on account of the size of the room, necessarily limited to a huge brass bed and a less elegant chest of drawers. Maude, the youngest child, also shared this room with her parents until she was about seven, when she moved into the front room with her sisters.

The third room was the kitchen, complete with stove, sink and table. The family ate in the kitchen. In the general hall were the necessary toilet facilities. The hall and the stairs were always dark, lit by a small, flickering gas flame and full of a horrible mingling of smells, each one unpleasant.

The head of the house was most inappropriately named Harold, which had shortened to Hal and which seemed to fit him poorly enough, even then. He was a big man, with a sort of pulpy quality. In his youth he had been a longshoreman and exceedingly proud of his muscle. As with many longshoremen, he had taken up boxing as a fad. He had belonged to several athletic clubs, which had combined politics and sports most advantageously to both elements. He had been a big fellow with long arms, but not especially "game" or courageous. He had never become more than a fairly interesting amateur. He had a quarrelsome nature that prevented those higher up from taking an interest in him. He was forever engaging in some long and stupid dispute. He always "had it in" for someone or was "getting ready to settle with that fellow."

After his marriage, the occupation of longshoreman became too strenuous for him. Gradually, his muscle disappeared and in its place came unhealthy-looking fat. Now, he was employed in the freight department of one of the big steamship companies whose docks extend, stretched out for blocks, along the North River. He was always getting rheumatism, complaining that he couldn't work along the river, laying off, spending a couple of weeks at home as a most quarrelsome and cursing invalid, and then, when the money disappeared, getting another job at the docks. There really was nothing else, now, that he could do. He walked with a peculiar swaying, boneless sort of gait and his skin, though tanned, had a spongy quality, too. His nose was large and red-veined. His mouth had a childish, weak-looking expression and his chin was a series of loose, pulp-like folds. His hair was light and thin—he was bald at forty—and his eyes were small and light and weak, too.

Mrs. Robinson had come from slightly better stock, though she, as well as her husband, had been born in New York's East Side. She had married Robinson when he was a husky and athletic longshoreman. She had admired him tremendously and had felt unbelievably happy and lucky when she found that he really wanted to marry her. Never very bright nor acquisitive and believing that the man, especially her man, was head of the family, she had, through years of child-bearing and motherhood and housework, lapsed into an almost silent, rather timid wisp of a woman. She always felt lucky because she didn't have to go to work, the way so many married women did. Her husband supported her, he did! Even Robinson's gradual disintegration did not bother her. She had always been taken care of—she'd be looked out for.

She had simple beliefs. She did her buying of clothes at the end of the season and put them away for the next year, when she could. You got better material that way. She thought that a girl who had "gone wrong" was better

off dead. She dismissed every new idea—and this included night school, music, books of all kinds and everything with any possible cultural trend as “non-sense.” She saw that her children had one good hot meal a day—usually a stew and she drank innumerable cups of tea and coffee. One or the other of these beverages was always simmering on her kitchen stove.

Lester was the oldest of the family. Two years older than Annie, at sixteen, he was starting to be “wild,” not an entirely undesirable trait in a boy, his parents felt. He hung around the corner cigar store and poolroom, smoked cigarettes and made remarks about girls. He worked, with fair stability, in a paper box factory, but had already been in one shady deal, which required police investigation and ended in a warning.

Annie followed Lester in age, to be followed in turn by Ethel, who at twelve was still at the loose-stockings, moist-nose age. So was Frank, who was ten, and, nights, with Lester, slept in the kitchen. Maude, about seven, was the beauty of the family and had thin, pale curls. There had been a younger child who had died.

Annie, at fourteen, was pale and thin and mouse-like, no more noticeable at first glance then than later. There is no reason to start her history at fourteen, in fact, save that at that age she made to her parents her first unusual and unassisted request. Needless to say it was dismissed immediately.

Annie dared to ask that she be allowed to go to High School! High School, mind you! When the family had been waiting for her to “graduate” from the public school so she could start to work. One can start to work when one has reached the age of sixteen, no matter what one’s scholastic accomplishments, or, more grandly, at whatever younger age one may have finished the work laid out by the Board of Education for the Grammar Schools. Annie was graduated from School Number One Hundred Something, a dingy, red-brick school with a treeless,

grassless yard when she was fourteen. Instead of great joy at this release from a formal education she had actually asked to go on—to go to High School. Three weeks later she had a very good job in a paper pattern house in lower Sixth Avenue.

### CHAPTER III

THE family watched Annie a bit closely for a while. Something unusual, here. Still, she seemed all right. There were no outbursts. She brought her money home, regularly, Saturdays, and only made the usual requests for unnecessary finery. Of course, she did take walks by herself way over to Fifth Avenue—and to Fourteenth Street—you got to watch girls like that—Fourteenth Street at night is no place for a young girl, alone—might go wrong—still, outside of that. It wasn’t as if Annie was one of these flashy girls—a quiet little thing like Annie—

If it hadn’t been for those walks, Annie might have settled down to years of the factory by day, neighborhood gossip or boys from the factory or neighborhood by night, a courtship, then, kissed in dark, unsavory halls, amusements at places just a trifle more pleasant, marriage, another dingy apartment, children. But Fourteenth was but two blocks to the South—and Fifth Avenue just a little more than two long blocks away.

Funny, Annie thought, even then, why so few of the girls she knew ever walked over to Fifth Avenue. Her own home was just West of Seventh Avenue. The girls walked farther every day. They walked as far East as Sixth, all the time. Somehow, something about Fifth frightened them. It didn’t frighten Annie. She liked the width of it and the quiet and the dignified, smooth traffic—the buses. She went for bus rides, by herself, Saturday afternoons and Sundays. The girls she knew didn’t think that was any fun. It wasn’t fun, exactly. It wasn’t that. It left you even unhappier than you were when you started. Yet it drove you on.

Seated on top of a bus, Saturday afternoon, her clothes never quite warm enough except in the warmest weather, Annie drank in what she saw—the people mostly. Not that her thoughts about them were kind and gentle, nor even just mildly curious. She hated them all. One after another.

"How I hate that old thing," she would mutter about a woman, fur clad, and not necessarily old. "Nasty little child," she'd say to herself, "nasty, fat little thing."

She would poke her nose in the air disdainfully at people in automobiles and think, "I hate you, old fools," after they had passed.

Yet, too, she had a sharp curiosity about these very people. As the bus jogged up Fifth Avenue or Riverside Drive she would peer into apartment-house windows. In winter, when the days grew dark early, she was glad when folks forgot to pull down the window shades.

"Lace curtains," she'd tell herself, "big pictures there, in wide gold frames—a big blue lamp shade—rich folks," and then, "Gee, I hate them all. They don't know me, not one of them."

Sometimes she would, wistfully, put herself in the way of people, hoping to be discovered, somehow, a West Sixteenth Street Cinderella. She would be pushed aside with a careless, "look where you're going, child." No one ever discovered her.

She even tried to pretend that she was adopted, asked her mother artful questions that might lead to a disclosure of her true origin. Well she knew that the Robinsons wouldn't have adopted anyone. There were too many Robinsons as it was. She looked too much like Ethel and Frank to be an adopted child, anyhow.

Annie grew ambitious in an unformed sort of way, restless, perhaps, more than ambitious. If she had had money, a few decent pleasures, a fairly comfortable home, she might have been satisfied. Folding paper patterns in a Sixth Avenue loft by day, not especially savory food and West Sixteenth

Street by night did not make life seem especially complete at fourteen.

Annie kept to the pattern of things. It's hard to break away at fourteen, at fifteen, even. She grew a bit sullen, a bit more envious of people who were more prosperous. Now, in Fifth Avenue she would issue pathetic and—she knew it, too—empty defiance to the street and the well-dressed crowds who passed her, there—"you just wait—I'll show you—I'll have nice things—"

How do you get nice things? That's it. Other folks' fathers provide them. Robinson grew more pulpy every day. His periods of being out of work grew longer. His weak, droopy mouth issued more frequent curses. No help there.

Ethel, at fourteen, went to work, too. Ethel was "fresh," a gayer, saucier type than Annie, though looking like her, in a way. Ethel worked at a milliner's and was forever bringing home rather wild and not entirely truthful stories of her adventures. Lester, who had changed jobs several times a year, now clerked in a chain cigar store and assumed a set of manners which fitted not at all with his usual behavior. At eighteen, he had already "got into trouble over a girl" and only the fact that the girl was older than he was and was wild, too, kept him from paying for his folly.

When Annie was sixteen she had passed from the loft in Sixth Avenue to a press clipping bureau and then to a Sixth Avenue department store. She didn't like the department store, really, but it was better than anything she had done. She was a cash girl for the basement aluminum ware and had a promise of being put "on the floor" when she was a year or two older.

Annie disliked the girls she worked with, much as she disliked her neighbors. They seemed stupid, dull, without any sort of an urge or inner feeling. Sometimes, she would try to put out feelers, to see if the other girls felt the restless rebellion that she felt so frequently. There was never a response of any kind. They thought the store was "all right," the hours "kind-a

long." They spoke of "fellas" and "steadies" and clothes. Marriage, perhaps only a few years off, was the only thing they looked forward to. Sometimes, looking into their complacent or shallow, petulant faces, Annie wanted to stick pins into them to find out if they would squeal or scream. They laughed at her, called her a queer one, let it go at that.

Annie went to the store's school. She was not especially ambitious, now, in a scholastic way, as she had been at fourteen. Still, the more you know the faster you get ahead. She had a quick mind. She never said much about the school, at home.

When she was seventeen, Annie discovered boys—or boys discovered her. Anyhow, she found herself suddenly with masculine attention. Until then, she hadn't thought much about boys. They were all right, in a way. She hated boys of Lester's type, fresh and forward. She "couldn't stand" the slovenly youths of West Sixteenth Street. She was so quiet and mouse-like that other types never presented themselves to her. Ethel, at fifteen, already had beaux. But then, Ethel was a "fresh kid" and, besides, was satisfied with almost any kind of youthful masculine attention.

At seventeen, Annie found that the peculiar chemistry of sex brought her unconsciously with boys and men. Some young clerk or wrapper or delivery boy was always waiting at the side door of the store for her at closing time. She wasn't one of the "awfully popular" girls, and yet there was always someone.

She liked these boys, for a while. They were "good company." They were full of a sort of comfortable repartee. They took her to the movies, nights, and bought innumerable sodas. Beyond that they could not go. What could they do? Most of them lived at home and helped support a home quite similar to the one Annie came from. They certainly were not marriageable, and, if they had been, the marriage would have meant a transfer from one

poor apartment to another. They were a transient pleasure. Some of them got fresh. They didn't get far with Annie. One didn't mind a kiss or two. That sort of paid for the evening's entertainment. They didn't go farther than that. Annie knew how to hold her own. You can't live in West Sixteenth Street without learning something about the world.

Roger Burson clerked in the silk department. He was a most elegant young fellow, with long white fingers. Quite unobtrusively Annie brought herself to his notice. She was clerking in the second-floor dress-notions, now. There was something different about Roger Burson. Annie watched him, when she could, at his work. He unrolled long bolts of silk, letting the material slip through his fingers. She watched him talking to feminine customers—jealous of them as she watched—and was always surprised at his smooth flow of conversation, his little deferences to his customers, his smile. He put back his head and half closed his eyes when he smiled—he seemed mysterious—deep, then. She liked his writing on his checks, a sort of large, clear, round writing. She kept a check that he had written and discarded. She was as familiar with his store number as most girls are with the telephone number of more fortunate young men.

After a seemingly long period of indifference, Burson began paying attention to Annie. He waited for her, after closing hours. She was just a bit dizzy when she saw him waiting, the first time, his sleek brown hair, his slender rather pale face. What a nice fellow he was!

Of course she couldn't ask Burson to call! He lived in an uptown apartment with a widowed mother, who had a little money. She didn't dare let him see the Sixteenth Street apartment. She did meet him, after supper, on several occasions. He took her to the theatre a couple of times. She encouraged him as much as she could. He held her hand in the theatre. He hinted at further and more violent love-making.

What could come of it? He couldn't marry—had to do his share toward supporting his mother—it took all they had just to get along. His conversation was not as thrilling as Annie had hoped it would be. It was quite dull, in fact, little rather feminine gossiping things about the store and about styles, tales of his yearly two weeks' vacation, tales of his bowling club, which met once each week. She tried to get him to talk about some of the vague, restless things that were in her own mind. He never seemed to know what she was talking about.

One warm Spring evening they took a bus-ride to Central Park and then walked through the park slowly. Annie walked close to Burson, took his arm, encouraged him in every way. He kissed her. Oh, what of it? What if he did kiss her? Could anything come of it all? She'd better be careful—falling in love would be easy enough—too easy. That wouldn't get her anywhere. After that, Annie avoided Burson. It was easy enough, after all.

A few nights afterward, Annie, all alone, walked up Fourteenth Street. It was a hot night and the white lights of the street, the cheap colors from the shows and the shop windows seemed suddenly to sicken her. She was eighteen! Eighteen! She used to think, when she was a little girl, that something grand would happen to her. Nothing would. Not unless she made things happen. It was like waking up, somehow, just walking down Fourteenth Street. Her street—two blocks from her home!

In one store there was an auction. A man with a persuasive voice was begging customers to bid on an elaborately boxed tea-set of red and white Japanese china. Annie ventured inside the door. Half a dozen youths smiled invitingly, even moved toward her. She waited for a minute, hurried out again. Idly enough, she ventured into a penny arcade two doors away. The place was full of a poorly dressed, shuffling crowd, leering men, bold-eyed women. A mechanical piano blared out a popular

song. A wax figure, dirty, slightly melted, held a sign which told of a fortune to be had for a penny. There were peep-shows for pennies, too, showing partly nude women of generous proportions, music for pennies, with long and unbelievably unsanitary tubes to be fitted into your ears if you cared to receive music in this fashion. There were weighing machines and machines which told your strength or gave you a penny's worth of electricity. A fellow in a sailor's uniform grinned at Annie and pointed toward one of the peep-shows.

"Seen this?" he asked. "It's hot stuff!"

Annie gave him what she hoped was a reproving stare, hurried down the street, turned up Fifth Avenue.

#### CHAPTER IV

Yes, here she was—eighteen—and she had nothing. They were getting poorer and poorer all the time. Lester was always getting into trouble or out of work, grumbling when he had to help at home and threatening to go elsewhere to live. Ethel put her money on her back and wouldn't do a great deal to support the family. Her father's rheumatism, which usually disappeared in summer, seemed worse than ever, now. At least, he had more time at home for cursing and complaining about it. Even now, she knew he was sitting, a huge sponge which overflowed the red plush chair, cursing the weather and his rheumatism and his family. She couldn't exactly blame him. After all, he didn't get a great deal out of life.

Well, what did she get out of life? Working all day in the store wasn't fun, either. She wasn't the type who got ahead, got to be a buyer. She knew that. She might stay there forever, just behind a counter. Marriage? Who could she get? Oh, any one of half a dozen fellows, if she tried hard enough. What would she have then? A home like she had now and babies—or no babies and a job, if she found a man

long." They spoke of "fellas" and "steadies" and clothes. Marriage, perhaps only a few years off, was the only thing they looked forward to. Sometimes, looking into their complacent or shallow, petulant faces, Annie wanted to stick pins into them to find out if they would squeal or scream. They laughed at her, called her a queer one, let it go at that.

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father, melting out over the red plush rocker, you would have thought that Annie had already entered into a life of vice and crime because, for a week or two, she didn't contribute to the family's upkeep.

"Shut up about me," she said, finally. "I don't know why I'm the family goat, but if I am, I am, and that's all there is to it. I'll get something."

She did. She got a stenographic position in a small hardware company. The proprietor insulted her, finally, so she quit. She could have "called him down," kept on with her job. What was the use? There were other jobs. There weren't any possibilities there, anyhow, excepting the small salary—a salary only a degree better than she had had as a clerk in the department store. That proprietor! What a stupid, 'lazy, dusty fellow! If she wanted to be insulted she'd never had chosen him to do it. Certainly not. Oh, well . . . might as well get experience. . . .

She was a better stenographer now. A few weeks more of idleness and Annie was with the Cutter Rubber Company, in lower Broadway.

This was something like it—a clean office, with glass partitions, brisk girls, sleek young men, busy, pompous officials. For the first time in her life Annie felt that she fitted in. This was what she had wanted all of the time—in a way. At least she had always wanted cleanliness and order. You can't afford those when you are poor. She rather liked the work, even. She developed into rather a good stenographer, a bit uncertain, perhaps, as to punctuation, but always willing enough to consult the dictionary as to the spelling of a difficult word.

Annie began to wear the neat, unobtrusive business clothes that became almost a part of her personality later. Up to that time she had worn odds and ends of things that did not seem to belong together—a suit bought at a closing-out sale, a blouse her mother had picked up at a bargain. Annie insisted that she had to dress well now. As her salary was larger, her mother began to

respect her almost enough to allow her to buy clothes without reproach for the money she was "throwing away on style."

For some time, Annie was satisfied at the office. She always arrived on time. She did her work fairly well, almost eagerly. She spent the usual amount of time gossiping with other girls in the rest room, of course, but this was more from a desire to see how the other girls lived and to find out what they knew than from any time-wasting motive. She had always had a curiosity about people.

At home things were just as bad. Lester and her father worked spasmodically, with wonderfully good excuses for their idleness. Ethel still cared for cheap finery. Frank had a job as messenger boy, but didn't make much money. Maud, the beauty of the family, wore yellow curls still, and, of course, had to have wearing apparel harmonious with her loveliness. Mrs. Robinson had dreams for Maud.

There ought to be some way to improve things. Certainly things couldn't go on that way always, that disordered apartment, never quite enough money for actual necessities, never any touch of pleasant living. Annie thought about this a lot. Her position was pleasant enough, in a way. It wasn't exciting, now that she was accustomed to the routine of the office. Certainly, in the normal course of events, no great change would take place. She might get a slight raise once or twice a year. She might keep her position for years and years. There were several stenographers at the Cutter Rubber Company who had been there for ten years! They received only a slightly larger salary than Annie, were laughed at a bit for their faithfulness—certainly nothing to look forward to.

Occasionally a girl in the office got married. Annie would meet the "lucky man," like as not. When he was a fellow employee, his salary was just about the size of Annie's own. She couldn't afford to marry a man like that. Once in a while one of the girls man-

aged a vacation to one of the nearby summer resorts and returned engaged and with stories of great luxuries ahead. Annie found that these summer-vacation catches were invariably old and homely and not as rich as they were supposed to be. Anyhow, Annie couldn't have managed a summer-resort vacation if it would have resulted in an engagement to the Prince of Wales.

Yes, marriage was all right—if you could afford it—if you had only yourself to look out for or if you found a rich man. Certainly no rich man was going to marry Annie. She knew that. Occasionally girls did find rich men—married their bosses, even. No such luck for her.

Then Margery Miller had an "affair." It was not the most savory sort of an affair, but Annie drank in the details eagerly. Old Man Bruntage—the last person in the world you'd suspect, unless you were familiar with business offices—took the dashing Miss Miller to Atlantic City for the week-end. Actually! Before going, he bought Miss Miller an entirely new outfit of clothes, which, rumor said, she needed badly, especially the silk underneath. Well, Bruntage and Miss Miller returned, after the week-end, but Bruntage's wife got wind of the affair—that does happen sometimes—and, though she wasn't the sort who wanted a divorce, preferring the money and position which went with being Bruntage's wife, she did insist on "something being done about it." Something was done about it. Miss Miller was fired.

The girls talked it over in the rest room.

"What a fool she was!" Lucile Stork volunteered. "She ought to have known it would get out. Those things always do, sooner or later. And when a girl's reputation is gone, there is just nothing she can do." Lucile was holding out for matrimony.

"There's another thing, too," this from Mabel Foster, "as soon as you give in to a man he doesn't care for you any more. He's interested only as long

as you keep him guessing. All Margery has got is a few clothes. You bet, if I was going to do a thing like that—though of course I wouldn't think of such a thing . . ."

The girls were right. Annie felt that. And yet, if you didn't do anything at all—excepting your work, day after day . . .

Of course if you weren't a Margery Miller—if you kept your head—well, that might be a way, too.

Annie was given the position made vacant by Miss Miller's departure. Annie was Bruntage's private secretary!

## CHAPTER V

ANNIE was a little mouse. Of course. She dropped her eyes when Bruntage spoke to her suddenly. She said "yes, sir," and "no, sir," with unnecessary frequency. She saw that her blouses were always fresh and dainty. She pouted her lips over her pencil when she was thinking. Bruntage told her that she was "very good, indeed. Quite satisfactory in the position." Was that all? What a plain thing Margery Miller was, actually! Wasn't Annie even that nice looking? It worried her just a little—Bruntage was awfully respectful.

Perhaps men were simpler than she had imagined them to be. At least Bruntage was. Annie found that out. She began wearing rather thin stockings to the office. Bad taste? She had thought so, from things she had read in "advice to the working girl." After all, though, perhaps she and the woman who wrote the advice weren't quite in accord as to results, after all.

Annie's nice office oxfords gave way to thin slippers with buckles on them. She crossed her legs a bit. Simple? Of course. Weren't men simple? She continued wearing her plain little clothes. Occasionally her hand touched his as she was taking dictation. She would pull it away and say, "Oh, pardon me," rather dreadfully embarrassed. She kept one flower on her desk, in a glass of water,

There were a lot of questions Annie had to ask Bruntage. Men are so much wiser and more sensible than girls!

"Oh, thank you, sir—I knew you'd know. I'm sorry I had to take up your time. There was no one else around here who could have told me." And,

"I don't mind working overtime, really. I know how particular you are about the reports, sir. I'd rather take a lot of time and feel that they were right."

One day she was crying. She brushed tears away, unobtrusively, as she typed a letter.

Oh, dear! Had Mr. Bruntage noticed? Annie was so sorry. It wasn't anything—anything he could do, really. Her—her father was ill—had been ill a long time and now there were doctors' bills. Quite a lot of them. Oh, yes, she helped pay the expenses—had the burden of things, rather . . . had worked since she was fourteen . . . went to night school to learn stenography. Oh, she had wanted to ask someone there—didn't know who to ask . . . of, if she could . . . if there was some way to—to get some money . . . yes, it was awful to be poor . . . not a great deal—nothing to Mr. Bruntage . . . two hundred dollars . . . she'd pay it off . . . pay it every week . . . a few dollars at a time.

It was lovely of Mr. Bruntage! She could pay him—not have it go through the office at all. Oh, he was lovely to her . . . she hadn't dreamed . . .

Bruntage gave Annie the money, a little roll of bills, not very new ones. Annie started a bank account the next day, at noon. Not a great deal, of course. Still! She put three one-dollar bills on Mr. Bruntage's desk every Friday, after the cashier came around with the pay-envelopes. She hadn't signed any paper, of course—this had been too personal for that—just between them. How good of Mr. Bruntage!

It was a few weeks later that Mr. Bruntage proposed a trip to Atlantic City. He'd be more discreet this time. Anyhow, what if he was found out—

though he wouldn't be, of course. A nice, discreet little thing, Miss Robinson. Young, too, and innocent. There were preliminary things, of course. Then, plans.

Annie would need clothes, of course. She dropped her eyes. A tear showed in the corner of one of them.

"I've—I've never had any pretty things," she said.

That could be remedied easily enough—easily enough. After they got to Atlantic City . . .

Annie shook her head. She didn't like to say anything—she—she was ashamed of the things she had . . . wouldn't embarrass Mr. Bruntage by being seen with him. Still—she didn't know much about buying things. . . .

Mr. Bruntage was clever about buying things, it seemed. Three days later, on a Thursday, he met Annie, by appointment, in a little tea shop in East Fifty-seventh Street. He took her to some shops he knew about . . . yes, Annie had naturally good taste, it seemed—the saleswomen said so. She chose rather plain things—her style, really, but awfully expensive and well-made. Bruntage paid cash for the things. Annie had them sent to her home. Her mother wasn't clever about things like that—if clothes didn't have a lot of trimming her mother wouldn't think they were expensive.

Friday, modest and shy as ever, Annie appeared at the Cutter Rubber Company. Sometimes, during the day, she caught Mr. Bruntage's eyes, dropped her own eyes, smiled. There was a delicious secret between them. They were to meet at two, on Saturday, at the Pennsylvania Station, to begin their holiday.

That evening, Annie ate the half-cold stew without protest. She didn't have anything to say when her father set forth his usual complaints—his rheumatism was worse, it seemed, and some freight that was being unloaded at the docks had gone wrong and of course he had been unjustly blamed for it.

After the evening meal, Annie wrote a letter. Letters were written seldom

enough in the apartment-house in West Sixteenth Street. They were almost an event, in fact. Annie had brought home a new box of writing paper, a new bottle of ink and an office pen for the occasion. Now, she cleared off the table herself, put an old *Saturday Evening Post* on it, in lieu of a desk blotter, and sat down to write.

"Writing a letter?" asked her mother, with a nice mixture of social interest and curiosity.

"Why, yes," said Annie simply, and didn't explain. She had learned that you don't have to explain, if you don't want to.

"You needn't be so grumpy about it," her mother answered, with quite unnecessary anger, considering her question and Annie's reply. "A lot of pleasure I get from my children . . . running around at all hours . . . doing all kinds of things under my very nose . . . It seems to me that your mother . . ."

Annie was writing her letter. She wrote it in pencil, first, on a piece of Maud's tablet paper, crossing out one sentence, substituting another. Then she copied it carefully in ink on her new paper. It was plain white paper and the ink was black. When she had copied her letter she addressed an envelope, put the letter in and sealed it. She started to tear up the first penciled draft, thought better of it, tucked it into her purse instead. After all, she had tried hard on that letter. This is what Annie had written:

MY DEAR MR. BRUNTAGE:

I don't know how to tell you, after all of your kindness to me. I can't go—that's the easiest way of saying it. I just can't. I've thought it over and over. Maybe it's because of the home training I had when I was a little girl. I don't know. It just doesn't seem *RIGHT*, that's all. I never could come back to my parents and my little sister, if I did such a thing. I hope you will understand how I feel. I'm not coming back to the office, but I want you to know that I shall always remember your kindnesses to me—we have always been poor and never before have I ever had any pretty things—and your goodness to my father during his illness.

Sincerely,

Annie Robinson.

Annie put on her hat and coat and called to her mother,

"I'm going out to mail my letter, Ma, and I may take a bus ride before I come back."

It was customary, in the Robinson household, to make some explanation of one's departure.

At the corner, Annie dropped the letter into a letter-box. She smiled as she saw, in her mind, Bruntage's expression as he read it. He'd open it himself—she had marked it "Personal" and he always opened personal mail. That stupid little Martin girl would probably be in his office, in her place. What an old fool Bruntage was! Well, he'd never show that letter to his wife, at any rate.

## CHAPTER VI

ANNIE climbed onto a bus at the corner and chose a seat on top. She had always liked bus-riding. Now, as she rode uptown, she thought over things much as she had done when she was a little girl. She was a little more definite about things now. She felt a certain exaltation, a slight wave of success, such as she had never felt before. After all—she had accomplished something. Old Bruntage! What a fool he was! Yet she knew from office gossip that he had taken at least four other girls on week-end trips, besides the stupid Miss Miller, who had preceded her as private secretary. None of the other girls had rebelled. Silly little flies—they had walked into his net, perhaps even grateful to get the few things he had given them, the couple of days at a good hotel. Horrid old man! Ugh! How mad he'd be at that letter! She'd chosen expensive clothes, too, and had paid back only a trifle of that two hundred dollars. Well, he had picked her out as a poor, simple little office worm. Let him be more careful next time—the old fool.

Not that he'd see through it. He'd probably just wish she hadn't been so virtuous. That was just as well. She hoped she'd never see him again. At

that, the office would have to give her good recommendations. She'd telephone in the morning—say she was ill. Bruntage wouldn't dare say anything. Not he! The old fool.

There were days ahead . . . other things. For the first time life offered a pleasant pathway, with a narrow, glittering lane of possibilities. Of course, there were limits. Annie knew she wasn't the type her employer married. Anyhow, few enough employers really married their stenographers—outside of romantic short stories. Of course offices weren't devilish holes of iniquity. Certainly not. There were thousands of business men who never noticed a pretty face during business hours. Of course. Still, there were thousands more not above a stolen kiss, awfully susceptible to flattery, easy to prey upon, no doubt because they thought that they were the stronger power. Perhaps. She would see.

As the bus jostled her uptown, Annie looked into shop windows and then into homes and apartments much as she had done when she was a little girl. She still hated these people, their comfort and their smugness. Each of these families with some man at the head earning money. Imagine her father earning enough money for the family. Cleanliness . . . nice, smooth-flowing lives . . . pretty things. Oh, well.

She could get a good salary. She was a good stenographer now, had learned about offices. Lower New York, of course. Brokers, advertising men, officials, men like that. Big offices. That was where to go. Men who dealt in abstract things—stupid men who thought they were "deep" because they knew a few seemingly important facts. Those were the men who believed silly things, who looked for a sort of pseudo-romantic relation mixed in with their dry business facts. A conference in the morning, a long luncheon with a couple of men, peppered with seemingly important business details, letters dictated during the afternoon to a sympathetic little secretary. Of course.

If she had only herself! That would

be easy enough. These girls who spoke so much about being self-supporting, when all they had to do was to support themselves! Of course—she could get away—it would be physically possible just to get out—out of the whole thing, out of helping to support the family and keeping an eye on Ethel and trying to put some sort of ideas into Maud's head. The family would get along somehow. Families always did, she supposed. However, the burden of support, started when Annie was fourteen, couldn't be thus easily swept aside. After all, she was, in a way, fond of her family, even—certainly she was fond of Frank and Maud—yes, even of Lester and Ethel and her mother and father. After all, none of them had any too much, either. Maybe they liked nice things, too.

Two hundred dollars! In the bank! To do with what she wanted to! Nice clothes, too, a good coat and dress and blouses and a couple of hats. She could give Ethel a hat and a blouse and still have nicer things than she had ever had before.

Two hundred dollars! The bus lumbered past apartment-houses, blank, factory-like, stolidly respectable, each with its little squares of light to indicate the families who lived, in cliff-dwelling fashion, each in its own little portion. How funny—all of these little families, each member of each family coming home each day, like little homing pigeons to a particular little nest in the cliff. Nice little nests! Why, if her family could live like this—clean and respectable—if Frank and Maud could have a chance. Why not? There was even the university up here—classes at night—you don't even have to be graduated from a high school—Annie had heard that. If Maud could come up here to live and go to school—if Frank could "get" this neighborhood—Ethel and Lester, even. Why, the only reason Ethel and Lester liked cheap things, probably, was because they hadn't ever had any better to like, if they had wanted to. After all—Annie knew she had had to fight for every-

thing she had—stenography even. Even now—oh, well, there wasn't any better way that she could think of.

Why not? The two hundred dollars would pay for moving and for . . . Moving—that old trash? The broken-down table, the hideous brass bed—the red-plush rocker her father melted into and went to sleep in every night after dinner—the cot in the living-room. It would be great—living up here—up-town—in a new apartment, clean and new—with a bedroom for the girls and another for Lester and Frank and one for her parents—and a living-room for—why, for company even . . . and a regular dining-room and a clean—maybe even a white kitchen. It could be done! Why not? The most that could happen was that they could be put out. Even that might be more fun than Sixteenth Street.

Annie knew that her father had always been against moving, had said that the Sixteenth Street apartment was near his work. Let him complain. Why, he was out of work most of the time, anyhow. Let him take a subway to work. And he would work! She'd see to that. She'd be boss now. Lester would work, too, or he couldn't come home. Absolutely. As for the others—well, her mother would agree, dough-like, with the strongest—and the kids would welcome anything, even if they couldn't see that it would help them.

Annie nodded abstractedly to her mother when she came in. Her father was asleep in the red rocker, a big, awkward figure, his weak mouth slightly open, a three-days' growth of hair on his face. Maud was the only young person at home. Maud was thirteen now, and finishing grade school, a round-faced girl, pretty in a dull, usual sort of way, but with good features. Her mother still considered Maud a beauty.

Annie called to Maud:

"Come out in the kitchen while I get a drink."

Wondering, Maud followed her elder sister. She rather obeyed Annie.

Drinking from the kitchen tin cup, Maud said:

"Now, don't yell about this—not one word to anyone else, understand. You're the only one I'm going to tell."

"All right," nodded Maud, importantly, eager for a confidence.

"If you lived in a swell—I mean, well, a grand apartment uptown, which had a bathroom and a big living-room where you could have company and near the park and all, would you keep on going to school—to high school, I mean?"

"Say, who's going to leave the family a fortune?" asked Maud.

"Nobody. You answer me. Give me your word of honor you'll keep on going to school—clear through high school—and—and college, maybe?"

"Sure," said Maud. She'd just as soon go to school. She never made very good grades, but, anyhow, it certainly was better than working. Then:

"But say, what's that got to do with us? Thinking of moving? A swell chance this family has got for anything. What's it all about, anyhow?"

"Nothing," said Annie, "only you go in there—and not a word out of you—understand. Only you got something to think about."

## CHAPTER VII

ANNIE went to sleep that night with a wonderfully warm feeling of sacrifice. She was going to do a lot of things—for her little sister—for the rest of the family. Yet, even through all this she sensed something else. Of course it wasn't all for her little sister—not quite all—it was more than that—a desire for nice things, a few comforts—and under that—a desire to try her own skill—to sort of get into a battle.

She dreamed about apartments and new furniture—kept walking up steps that tumbled down as she walked on them and woke up with a horrible picture in her mind, of herself struggling with a man who had a knife in his hand. The picture would have frightened her even more if she hadn't remembered

that she had seen that same picture in front of a show on Fourteenth Street just a day before. Oh, well, hadn't she heard some place that dreams go by contraries or that they show your disposition or something?

She didn't tell her family she had quit working. She left, dressed in her new coat and hat, at her usual hour, but took a bus uptown. Annie was apartment hunting!

At ten, as a slow-moving janitor was showing her through a far too elaborate eight-room apartment—might as well look at all kinds and get an idea of how other folks live—Annie glanced at her cheap wristwatch and laughed. At ten was the time Bruntage got to the office and looked over his mail. What a fool the man was, anyhow!

Annie found a six-room apartment three days later. It was in One Hundred and Twelfth Street and was convenient to the One Hundred and Tenth Street Subway station, the buses, Central Park and Columbia University. To city dwellers with exacting tastes, the apartment might not have been exactly without faults. Annie dared not consider anything more expensive.

Anyhow, it was quite a step from West Sixteenth Street. The long, rather dark hall might not have been the last word in apartment buildings, but there was a nice, though not extremely large, front living-room, with three windows, three bedrooms, with a court window to each of them, a bathroom with quite modern appointments, a square dining-room with a dome, a plate rail and two court windows, and a nice kitchen, complete with gas stove, ice-box and built-in cupboards. Annie examined it carefully, spoke about decorations, gave her father's business address, explained that he was "in the shipping business" and made a deposit.

A few days later she called at the apartment again, made final arrangements for decorating—as much ivory paint as the owner would allow and tan wall-paper throughout the house—she hadn't read magazines all these years without profiting by them. The renting

agent was glad enough to get the apartment rented, it seemed. He had not inquired too closely into the references. Annie paid a month's rent in advance.

Well, that was done! She'd get the money somehow. She'd always worked, when it came to that—always expected to . . . probably. Lots of men had made advances—men always did that—what had she ever got out of it? She'd see.

A few pleasant, exciting days, now, of applying for positions in the morning—or writing letters of application—and furniture hunting in the afternoon. Life was fun these days!

A job then—at a better salary than she had ever had. Nothing doing there. She found that out in a few days. Such respectable people. Still, she had to have something—expenses went on—the apartment was nearly ready.

During her lunch hour, one day, she made final arrangements about the furniture. She bought it at a large time-payment house. An instalment would be due the first of every month. If there were more than two lapses in payment—she believed it was two—the furniture would be taken away. Fair enough! She gave her father's business address—he was working, temporarily, again—Ethel's employer's name and her own. She made a first payment on the furniture. There would be just enough of the two hundred dollars left for moving the small amount of wearing apparel, the few things her mother probably wouldn't part with.

She liked the furniture she picked out. There was a davenport, covered in a cotton tapestry, though the design wasn't half bad. This opened out into, the salesman assured her, "a full-sized bed." This was for Maud. You couldn't put three people into one of those tiny bedrooms! There was a wing chair to match it, and another chair covered in blue velour. After all, her father had to have some chair in which he could sprawl—relax after his day's work or his day's idleness. There were several smaller chairs, a stylish "library table," a small, open book-shelf,

though, so far, the family owned no books, a plain tan rug. For the bedrooms there were inexpensive "sets," nearly alike, in grey, white and ivory enamel. For the dining-room there was a plain round oak table, a buffet, ten chairs—three extra for possible company. The Robinsons had never had company at mealtime. The kitchen needed no furniture save a plain table and a couple of chairs. Well, that was done.

The furniture was delivered on Saturday. Saturday was a half-holiday for Annie. She went to the apartment on the Subway, sitting in a nervous tension the whole way. She reached the apartment before the furniture did. The floors had been varnished. The smell of paint was clean. The empty rooms were fresh with the cheap tan paper. Annie had a pleasant, electric feeling of adventure. What would the family say? How had she dared?

The men came with the furniture. There was much untying of string, setting of bedroom mirrors in the dressing-table frames. The furniture was in place! The papers were pushed onto the dumbwaiters. The apartment was finished!

To Annie it looked perfect. Cheap, perhaps. What of it? There was a floor lamp, with a yellow silk shade. There were bright rag rugs for each room. How well the tapestry pieces looked and the big blue chair! Empty—well, perhaps. Still, when the family got in, put a scarf on the table, got a Victrola, maybe, later, and a few books and magazines. Gee, what would the family say?

Annie had arranged for gas and electricity and—yes—a telephone. She could hardly believe her own daring. She didn't know anyone to telephone to, excepting a few girls who had worked where she had. What of that? She'd meet people. It would be nice for Maud and Ethel, too. It's awfully hard for girls to get invitations to things if they haven't a telephone.

She closed the apartment, opened it again with her own key, to see if it

were really there, took a bus home. A cheap apartment—what could it mean to all of these people in cars, who passed, smug in expensive clothes. What did they know—of—anything, those fat-faced women who never earned a cent in their lives, with their sleek husbands next to them.

She looked hate at them, as she had when she was a little girl. She'd—no—she couldn't show them—it wasn't that . . . exactly . . . she'd get things . . . her way—something, anyhow.

## CHAPTER VIII

ANNIE was trembling when she got home. She took off her coat, hung it carefully on a hanger in the crowded closet—she and Ethel would have a closet all of their own now. . . .

She went into the kitchen, began, mechanically, to set the table.

"Time you're getting home," her mother growled at her. "Saturday afternoon, and you and Ethel walk the streets all day . . . a lot of help you are to me. . . ."

She didn't answer. She peeled potatoes.

All of the family were home except Lester. She waited until they had finished the thin fried steak and the watery potatoes. She started, mechanically, to eat the canned peaches. Then:

"We—we move tomorrow," she said.

"What do you mean . . .? What are you talking about?"

Annie felt triumphant, a bit dizzy. She went on:

"I don't want one word out of anyone here. I'm tired of—this dirt and—and everything. Sixteenth Street—it isn't good for Maud—or Ethel, either. I've got a place all picked out—"

"You've got a place picked out," her mother said, "you—"

"Yes, I have," said Annie. "I got the furniture, too. Everything. It's ready this minute. The family can come with me or not, as you want to. I'm going. Not one cent of mine goes into this house again. You keep that place up nice or I'm gone. I bring in

the money and I'm boss. I spoke to Thompson—on the corner—he's coming for the things. You can get boxes from the grocer in the morning. Thompson will give you a price on things. I'm—I'm boss in this family."

There were squeaks, groans, curses. Annie felt as if she were living in a sort of dream. She loved it. It was the first big dramatic moment she had ever had. And to think—she had been able to create this—this scene—out of her own mind! Anything was possible!

Mrs. Robinson, Ethel and Maud were finally moved to inspect the apartment at once. Annie went with them. They got into their coats and made the trip on the Subway. Annie never found out what they thought of it—they were too incoherent for that. At least they were going to move!

At twelve that night, Hal Robinson was swearing and saying things about "an ungrateful daughter—after all the years I've spent working for this family. . . ." At one, the next day—there were so few things to move it might as well be done right away, if it was Sunday—Robinson was bawling out orders to Thompson and talking about "his new apartment" and what he was "getting ready to do, moving uptown." Annie was boss, though. The family recognized that. If her mother wailed a bit about "girls who don't confide in their mothers" and "girls who go wrong, these days," her wails were tempered a bit and became almost a gentle accompaniment to living. After all—it was rather nice, having a six-room apartment uptown . . . easier to keep clean, too, though Annie did seem to be getting an awful crank about wanting things too particular.

Annie left the new job after three months of it. Outside of borrowing one hundred dollars for an operation for her mother—she was to pay it back three dollars at a time until the sympathetic boss told her "not to mind" after the fifth pitiful payment—Annie's relations with the firm were quite business-like. They were only too glad to give her excellent recommendations when

she found a more remunerative position.

It was at Rutgers & Olds, Advertising, that Annie got it. It was a good position, secretary to Rutgers, the president, a bluff old man, though with rather a good reputation. He liked to drink a bit, but then, didn't most men of his age? He was nearly sixty, with heavy white hair and a white mustache of which he was perhaps unnecessarily proud. Mrs. Rutgers was an invalid who traveled rather constantly. Rutgers accompanied her frequently—that is, he was always able to get away for a six weeks' winter vacation at Palm Beach or Lake Placid, a two months' European trip in the summer. He seemed fairly content, so far as his friends could tell, with both his domestic and business arrangements.

The office force at Rutgers & Olds knew that Annie came in answer to an advertisement. She came in quiet, mouse-like, unobtrusive. A slender little thing, with mild grey eyes and a nice mouth, a pale little thing with a low, gentle voice. Certainly no one to make a fuss about. You could tell why the old man picked her out from among the dozens who applied for the position. She was just the sort of a private secretary a man would pick out if he wanted his work done well and quietly, without any nonsense.

It was at Rutgers & Olds that she got her nickname. It is quite probable that she knew of it right away. She learned soon enough, and, for some reason, didn't seem to resent it. It is certain that she never altered her manner nor her mode of dressing.

It was Quigley, one of the usual and always present smart alecks, who named her.

"What's the new stenog's name?" he asked, elegantly.

"Robinson—Annie Robinson, I believe," someone told him.

"I thought so—Annie . . . as I live, 'Little Orphant Annie' to the life. To think that Orphant Annie's come to our office to play! 'Ain't she grand?"

The office force all rather resented Quigley. We—for it was there that I

first met Orphant Annie—took up for her. A nice little thing—did her work well—quiet and shy. Well, what of it—better than the usual office vamp who hung around trying to start something. Orphant Annie never tried anything with the office force, that hard-working, small-salaried contingent which did all of the work except the “conferences.”

“Orphant Annie isn’t an orphan at all,” Miss Drucker, Old’s secretary, reported, a few weeks later. “She’s got a lot of parents—two of them—and she lives up near Columbia and studies nights”—we somehow felt that she did—and her father’s awfully ill and about to have an operation.”

No one knew how Miss Drucker found out about the operation. It came to several hundred dollars, it seemed. Rutgers lent her the money.

It was the furniture, next, I believe. Everyone felt sorry about that. It leaked out as such things usually do. Little Orphant Annie—who would have been better off, doubtless, if she had been an orphan, but who was supporting invalid parents, instead, was buying furniture on the instalment plan. She had paid the first instalment and perhaps even the second one. Then illness had come to the household—the illness that had necessitated the operation on her father. Now the furniture was threatened—every piece was to be taken away. Rutgers wasn’t in town—Palm Beach, I believe. I think we were all ready to add our names to a subscription when someone—perhaps Olds—came to the rescue. Anyhow, the furniture was not removed. Orphant Annie, smaller and more mouse-like than ever, continued at the office. She had Rutgers’ private room, all alone, now, and seated at his enormous desk, took care of all of his private correspondence while he was away.

A little thing, then—a rumor—scarcely that—concerning a certain Jacobson, one of the firm’s clients—yes, the collar man—and our little Orphant Annie. Jacobson had a way of breezing in—which meant a “conference,” when Rutgers or Olds was about. Now,

he would go into Rutgers’ office and have a chat with Orphant Annie—business, of course. If it had been anyone else except Orphant Annie, with her pale face and candid eyes, everyone in the office would have gossiped—that Miss Flint, now, who used too much rouge—or the young and quite too flip Bailey girl. Orphant Annie! We all felt that someone ought to warn Annie—Jacobson’s reputation—all that. She seemed too young and untouched. No one had the indelicacy to say anything.

Someone saw them together at luncheon—it could have been a business luncheon, of course. Another time, one of the less important and perhaps quite jealous stenographers was sure she saw the two of them pass her, Saturday afternoon, in Jacobson’s limousine. That was about all—excepting Jacobson’s reputation and the fact that he was married.

The book-keeper, a quiet, rather lanky and certainly slow and stupid chap named Western, rather fell in love with Orphant Annie. We could see him, mooning around after her. We were a trifle surprised because she didn’t encourage him more—after all, he was a nice boy—only a book-keeper and not apt to go higher, but young and pleasant . . . after all, Orphant Annie was only a stenographer, herself. He quite forced his attentions on her—little things—flowers and candy and a book, occasionally. Finally, he confessed to someone that Annie had allowed him to give her a ring—not a large diamond, you know—they really weren’t engaged—but, if she had the diamond he felt that she’d be prejudiced a bit in his favor. He’d been out to call, too, awfully nice, their apartment—he’d met the mother and a younger sister or two.

## CHAPTER IX

WE all felt sorry when Orphant Annie left Rutgers & Olds. In a way, in spite of her quiet, mouse-like personality, she had added interest to the place. Rutgers had got back by that

time and he and Olds were sorry, too. We heard that they even called off the small debts she owed them—she'd been paying a couple of dollars at a time. Western took it hardest of all. He knew a lot of inside stuff, it seemed, though gradually a little of it leaked out to the rest of us. Jacobson was at the bottom of it. If we had only warned her! We were all sorry enough. We hadn't wanted to worry her. So, Jacobson, dog that he was, had led her on, tempted her with a promise of—well, of the things a girl like Annie doesn't have. We remembered things she had said, little things, "I've never had anything pretty all of my life"—things like that. A sick father and a mother who wasn't strong! Worked since she was fourteen! Going to school at night! Little and quiet and grey-eyed! And Jacobson had tempted her!

She had nearly yielded to him, it seemed. Western didn't blame her for that any more than the rest of us did. Poor little Orphant Annie. Jacobson had given her presents—had planned a trip—the trip was to Paris—we heard even that—had bought her things preparatory to sailing—had helped her when her father needed a second operation. Then . . . well, she couldn't go on. . . .

We never knew how Western found out about it all—even about the note Annie had written.

"He won't forget that in a hurry," Western told us, "She was noble, that little girl. Only outside, in a most superficial way, was she tempted at all. You can see how that was. The things she said in her letter—how she couldn't go through with it. At the last minute she saw it wasn't right—told him so. She—she don't care for me—but she said she'd keep my ring—and if she ever did care . . ."

It is so easy to lose track of a mere office acquaintance in New York. I lost track of Orphant Annie for over a year, then. Then, it happened that a friend of mine, a Miss Dorset, was employed by the firm of Bingham & Sons, Brokers. Calling for her, one after-

noon, I saw Orphant Annie—nice little Annie—in a big office . . . clad in a neat little frock, her smooth hair as tidy and her eyes as candid as ever. Somehow, Annie and I got to talking, a talk that was continued over a dozen tea-cups and Annie told me, in a most fragmentary way, the things that I have put down here . . . other things, too. Rutgers, for instance—sly old Rutgers with the white hair and white whiskers—to think that he. . . .

Miss Dorset told me, at the time, that Annie was well liked at Bingham & Sons. No—she didn't know anything about her history—hadn't heard that she was called Orphant Annie, even. I didn't tell Miss Dorset more than that. To be truthful, she didn't ask me. She was all sympathy for Annie, all full of little tales about her. Annie's oldest brother—his name was Lester, it seemed—had got into trouble over some money—hadn't quite understood about it—and was threatened with arrest—a jail sentence, even. Annie had come to Mr. Bingham, the youngest Mr. Bingham, about it, and of course he had loaned Annie the money—he had an awfully good heart. Annie had started to pay the money back, a little at a time, every week—it was just pitiful the way she tried—but Miss Dorset had heard that Bingham was just going to call the debt settled. After all, a poor little thing like Miss Robinson—did I know that her mother was an invalid?

I didn't keep up with Orphant Annie. I wish, now, that I had had more time for her. She was—and is—worth cultivating, I'm sure. A year after I talked with her at Bingham & Sons, her name came up, at a business luncheon one day. A man was telling a story,

"It served the fellow right," he was saying. "Men try to get away with too much in business. If the girl had been the usual office vamp, I'd have thought it was blackmail and might even have sympathized with the fellow, but in this case the conditions were exactly opposite. You could tell by the way the girl acted. At that, she escaped just in

time—probably always will carry the memory of the thing—the nicest sort of a girl—modest—lives at home with her folks—her mother is ailing—some sort of an incurable disease. . . . Well, I'm glad she got some money out of the fellow—under the circumstances. . . .”

What was the girl's name? I wanted to know.

Ordinarily, he couldn't have told me, of course, but as long as she was so absolutely innocent, absolutely without blame—everyone who knew the details was in absolute sympathy with her—Robinson or Robertson the name was . . . girl's first name was Annie—oh, a nice, decent little thing. Did I know her?

The name sounded familiar. I admitted that. Yes—an ordinary enough name, to be sure.

The other bits that have come to me about Annie have fitted in, as such things always fit in, as we always meet just the one old friend we think we never will see again—just as we always come across old acquaintances and old names—forming more complete pictures than we had ever thought it possible to form, when we were young.

Recently, at a dinner, a woman said, “I want you to meet someone you used to know,” and there was a stranger who turned out to be a former certain little Rose Smith, whom I'd gone to school with—second grade public school, St. Louis, when I was seven. Last week I had a picture post-card from India with the signature of an Irish lad I'd known fifteen years ago—he'd been a Russian dancer in vaudeville, then.

So there is nothing odd, then, in the

fact that yesterday, I should have seen Orphant Annie. I shall see her again, I hope, through the years. Perhaps, too, when I do not see her I shall hear little things, like the things I have heard that complete, in a way, the picture of her that I carry with me . . . the story of Hanson, the builder, who fell in love with her and wanted to divorce his wife—the story of Dewitt, who fell at her feet and apologized—and was overheard—because he had misjudged her . . . Pinnet, who sent Annie's little sister through college.

A house in the country—Lester and Ethel married—Frank well established in business—little Maud grown up and graduated from college. I almost shed a tear over Orphant Annie a sentimental tear for her goodness and her gentleness—a shy little thing in quiet clothes, a dear little thing with big grey eyes and a pale eager little face. Then I thought of Hilden and the money he lent her for that always-necessary family operation, of Lewis and the letter his wife received by mistake.

But, after all, Orphant Annie doesn't need any sort of a tear, I'm sure. She did what she could, in her way.

“I wouldn't have made things the way they are,” she told me, one day, “I just tried to get something out of the world, the best way I can.”

I see her, jogging along up Fifth Avenue, on top of a bus, looking into windows to see how “nice folks” live, hating folks that had things without even wishing for them, wondering about things. How many of us . . . well . . . who are we to say? . . .

*The End.*



# The Prime Minister of Spain

*By Robert Allison*

**E**RIC began the progress of the safety razor upon his soap-lathered face, the while he scrutinized his reflection in the mirror which hung over the washbowl in his room.

He reflected, apropos a fragment of conversation he had heard earlier in the day, that he would like to understand the Spanish language. Something swarthy in the very way the words were pronounced—something polished and sinister. There was a shrug of the shoulders which occasionally went with the words—a peculiarly Latin shrug. He rather admired the attitude toward life which the Spanish shrug expressed. The French shrug—well, it was different.

Having methodically gone over the right side of his face for the first time, he now devoted his efforts to the left.

Really he would learn Spanish. Be able to read Pio Baroja and—well others. Supposing he knew Spanish—might be nice to read three books in English during a month and one in Spanish. Keep in trim on the language. Never forget it after it was once learned. The really educated man could call himself at home in one foreign language at least. Took an awfully long time to learn the foreign tongue, though.

Presently the left side of his face had undergone the shaving process. Then with gasps and sputterings he deluged that face with great splashes of water. Whew! He now applied a second coat of lather to a physiognomy that was already beginning to show signs of maltreatment.

The best thing to do with Spanish after you once knew it, he reflected, was

to go where it was spoken. Strange places. Strange people. Mexico. Mexico City. He'd heard a lot about that town. Full of life. Lots of Mexican women, so he had been informed, held gratifyingly liberal views. Be all right if you could stand 'em. Of all those Eric had seen in this country his imagination had never undressed one.

It was now time to take up the razor for the second time over. This second time was always an ordeal. Eric became tense, and the attack, going against the grain, was on.

For a few moments his mind held to the razor. Then gradually it began again to drift.

If not Mexico, Spain ought to be a good country. The land of Philip the Second and the Inquisitions. That phrase "the cruel Spaniard." Still, they were Catholics, and Eric platonically reflected that they might be preferable to Methodists. If he ever *did* decide to take on a religion, it would be Catholicism. Something austere and beautiful about it. Imagine a Seventh Day Adventist *Ave Maria!*

At that moment he cut himself.

Here was a definite marring of a delicate job which always irritated him intensely. But his mind moved on. He remembered that long ago he had read a comment by Mark Twain on the inefficiency of foreign barbers. He reflected that he would probably have to shave himself altogether when he would be in Spain. Foreigners always looked poorly shaven in the pictures of them he had seen. Well, he'd be poorly shaven himself if he had to do his own scraping. Leave the beard grow, he reflected.

But right now it was best to continue with the work.

Spain was a minor country these days. They had just enough caution there not to fall into these wars and get chopped off. Might be a good place for an American who could talk to them right. Push and ambition, and all that. Acclaimed president by the mob. Richard Harding Davis. But it was in South America.

At this point he left off thoughts of the presidency long enough to concentrate on a determined rake over the chin. He always left that part of his face clean and painfully sore.

Rather be a great minister in Spain, though. An ardent supporter of the Castilian monarchy. Put Spain on the map. Like Bismarck in Germany. Or Disraeli in England. Theme for a grammar school debate: Resolved: that Bismarck was a greater man than Disraeli.

Eric returned to his position of prime minister of Spain. Absently he deluged his face with warm water, and emotionally reveled in a wide fame untroubled by any hard work that goes with political prominence.

While putting away his shaving apparatus he was interviewed by a score of American newspaper foreign correspondents. But he was enigmatic though polite to them. He did not have much time for the boys. The cares of State weighed heavily upon him. His hair at the temples was gray. Indeed, melancholy streaks had begun to appear all through his hair. So young, too. He permitted himself to be about thirty-five. Well, gray at the temples was enough. Cut out that part about the streaks.

He smiled wanly. It would be no joke when the cares of his adopted country began to bring old age.

The responsibility of putting away the shaving apparatus had been met. He now selected a shirt from the two which lay in the dresser drawer, and while searching for the diabolically hidden pins which the laundry inserts into

men's linen, he conceived another picture.

A noted and caustic literary critic—whom Eric always read carefully—was visiting Spain, availing himself of the opportunity to gaze upon a first-rate man. He was old now, this critic, and his cynicism was rotted into mere blank boredom. He had commented at such great length anent the idiocy of humanity that it was now idiotic to comment further. However, he could not fail to regard Eric as an equal. They were both great men.

The equal of the great critic meditatively donned his shirt.

Eric would of course make a point of breaking away from the palace long enough to dine with this man. He pictured himself surrounded by secretaries and masses of paper and great commotion—all of which would be deprived of his guiding hand while he took "time out" from the work for Spain that the great critic and himself might mutually edify themselves.

Hereupon he selected a necktie, and began the lengthy task of tying a passable bow. But in his mind the scene of that dinner was animated. Busy waiters scurried between the crowded tables through a haze of heavy tobacco smoke. A subdued flow of Spanish zoned through the air from many lips. Black-eyed women displayed brilliantly white teeth, and meditatively rested small pointed Spanish chins on palms cupped above rounded arms—arms that were black-lace-covered to the dimpled elbows which caressed the spotless tablecloths. There wasn't a señorita in the place that wasn't a lulu!

*Damn* this tie! It always *had* been hard to get right.

But as Eric and the great critic sat in this café, lingering over such wine as only Spain can boast, the señors kept telling their impish señoritas that it was indeed *el ministero* (Eric knew *that* much Spanish) who sat yonder with the strange American; and the señoritas exclaimed in that exaggeration of surprise which the Latins show; and comments about the stupendous fact that

the prime minister in person sat there flowed back and forth, with charmingly awed questionings and importantly positive reassurances.

Eric's position at his table enabled him to take in the front part of the great café: its fine plate-glass windows looked out upon crowded streets. Groups were constantly gathering outside to look in upon him and shout "vivo!" These enthusiasms he acknowledged with a tolerant smile, a slight inclination of the head, and a graceful wave of the hand that was half a salute and half—well, just graceful. Leisurely. But often he glanced at the great critic, who kept studying him closely, albeit covertly, and they exchanged amused smiles. Two men such as they knew the hollowness of fame.

Ah, just one more careful tug, and he'd have that damned tie right.

He and the great critic puffed meditatively upon their cigars. (They had cigars now.) They said little. Previously the talk had been commonplace enough. Stuff about the difference between Spanish railroad coaches and American Pullmans: the women of some place they had both visited; the cigars in Spain; Pio Baroja—oh, things.

There! That damned tie was tied. He now put comb to the hair that so recently had been grayed.

But now they meditated. The great critic commented upon some policy of Eric's that had shown a leaning toward true justice.

"The successful politician and the great statesman spend little time on so non-existent a thing (Thing?) as Justice. Love of Justice. Well!"

Eric admitted dreamily that he had indeed that weakness. But what could one do about it?

Eric's physical being in his material room had finished operations on the hair, and was engaged now solely in staring into the mirror into its eyes.

But Eric and the great critic had

come to a stage of frank speaking over their wine.

"I confess," said Eric, "I am curious to know what you will write about me."

They then remarked about what a human trait curiosity is. After a few moments the great critic spoke again.

"You have some few faults which I shall be constrained to point out," he said.

Eric was above asking what they were. Nevertheless he felt vaguely piqued.

"You have the advantage, M'sieur l'Critique. [M'sieur l'Critique—that wasn't bad.] You men of the pen can write your fill of us; we men of action can only work. We cannot write to justify ourselves; and we have not time to point out how you might with advantage to yourselves know more of your own jobs. I confess that were I to write of you I could describe a few of your shortcomings that have long bothered me."

"Doubtless," agreed the critic nonchalantly.

"As a matter of fact," said Eric with that frankness which only great men above the pettinesses of life are capable of, "I do not enjoy this little supper with you. I feel your keen mind probing into my motives, my aspirations, my [well, and so on.] I do not care to be probed. I prefer rather to be with the simple *canaille*, and be a superior. It is so dispiriting and boring to be with equals."

But the great critic was foredoomed never to answer. In the Arizona town, in the street before the rooming-house which sheltered the physical being of Eric, an ass brayed. The sound broke through the clatter of dishes, the hum of Spanish voices, the cultured words of the prime minister himself, and he suddenly broke away from his reflection in the mirror. The rarity of the coincidence smote him.

"Brother in the streets"—he almost spoke the words aloud—"brother, I waft thee greetings!"

# The Dream

*By Victor Thaddeus*

**O**NE night, in the fall of the year, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, entertained three thousand of his lords at a great feast. From his high throne at one end of the vast banquet hall he was able to watch with amusement the captive kings groveling at his feet; while, now and again, tiring of the attentions shown him by his concubines, he glanced idly over the abominations graven upon the walls. At last, feeling the need of a little exercise, he left the palace alone, and walked toward the gates of the city, where the guard prostrated themselves with a mighty shout at sight of the jewels of the royal tiara glittering in the moonlight. Walking slowly, and breathing deeply of the warm night air, the King passed out of Babylon.

The weather was cooler than usual; the King found the country very pleasant to walk in. Having drunk much wine during the course of the evening, he sat down heavily at last and, falling asleep with his mouth open, dreamed a strange dream.

He saw himself a small naked boy, running eagerly, though with no purpose, over a meadow toward the sea; at his side, and holding his hand, ran a small naked girl, very beautiful, with long golden hair that touched his shoulders lightly as they ran. It seemed to him that they came together to a white beach, facing a distant wonder among the clouds from which came the sound of music and many voices.

The sea was calm, and shone with a light of many colors streaming from the west. Behind them were tall purple mountains, touching the pale sky. A moment the boy stood irresolute, then with a sharp cry of recognition wound his arms about the slim body of the girl and carried her quickly over the shining water into the palace of his dreams; while the King, waking, passed through the gates of the city again, and returned to the feast.

But the soothsayers scoffed at the dream, reading in it no meaning whatsoever for Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon.



**A**LL men make a study of women, but some are not content merely with the regular course. They must take up post-graduate work.



**T**HE funniest thing about a girl is her sense of humor.



# Répétition Générale

*By George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken*

**A**NNOUNCEMENT. — Urged by friends, customers and large numbers of the miscellaneous gentry in all parts of the United States, including the late Confederate States, the editors of this favorite family magazine announce their candidacy for the offices of President and Vice-President of the United States. Neither has any active preference for either office; after the election, or before, if it is legally necessary, the matter may be determined satisfactorily by shooting dice. The platform upon which they propose to stand contains, so far, the following planks:

1

They promise, if elected, to procure the immediate restoration of the saloon, exactly as it existed before Prohibition — by the repeal, if it is possible, of the Eighteenth Amendment, but, if it is not possible, in spite of it.

2

They agree to veto all bills enacted by Congress embracing appropriations of public money, and to refuse to execute them in case they are passed over their veto, saving only bills for the upkeep of the Army and Navy.

3

They agree, within 24 hours after their induction into office, to discharge and dismiss, without pensions, at least half of the judges now sitting in the Federal courts of the Republic, and to make every feasible effort to railroad the discharged jurists to jail.

4

They agree to discharge and dismiss the whole diplomatic corps of the United States, and to prevent, if possible, the return of any member of the existing corps to the United States.

5

They agree to close at once all the public offices in Washington, save only the War Department, the Navy Department and the Postoffice, and to have all persons now holding appointments in such offices run out of Washington within 24 hours.

6

They agree to stop the payment of interest on all public obligations of the United States, save such as were bought at the time of issue by persons who now hold no more than \$10,000 worth apiece.

7

They agree to liberate at once all persons now held in Federal prisons for so-called political offenses, save those of whom it may be proved that they are not guilty.

8

They agree to abrogate and nullify any existing Tariff Act or any Tariff Act to be passed by Congress during their term, by discharging and dismissing all collectors of customs, tide-waiters, appraisers, inspectors and other such blackmailers.

9

They agree to put into execution at once a scheme of universal military service, whereby every resident of the United States, male or female, citizen or foreigner, shall join the colors on reaching the age of 21 years, and serve continuously for at least two years.

10

They agree to hang at least 10,000 labor leaders a year.

11

They agree to suppress the Y.M.C.A., Columbia University, the Sons of the Revolution, and the Anti-Saloon League.

12

They agree to prevent, by the use of the full military and naval forces of the United States, any interference with the free exercise of any of the fine arts, or of any orderly sport.

13

They promise to restore free speech absolutely, without any reservation whatsoever. They agree to send the Army to seize, and, if necessary, execute, any person or persons who shall offer to interfere with the exercise of free speech and free assemblage by any other person or persons.

14

They agree to insure the utmost conceivable religious freedom. They engage to protect every resident of the United States in his right to worship any god, devil or other supernatural bugaboo in any manner agreeable to him, so long as it does not involve the dissemination of noises or odors offensive to nearby persons.

15

They agree to abrogate and nullify all laws prohibiting the free activity of quack doctors, sellers of patent medi-

cines, bogus mine stocks, Polish government bonds, etc.

16

They agree to deport all Armenians from the United States.

17

They agree to bend their best efforts to the restoration of chattel slavery in the South, and to extend it to the North, and to make it include white slaves as well as colored ones.

18

They agree to seize all persons who acted as Y.M.C.A. secretaries or Red Cross agents during the late war, and to cause them to serve in the Army for at least five years, unless sooner killed on the field of honor.

19

They agree to collect all war debts owed to the United States by foreign powers, by force and in full.

20

They agree to abolish the Interstate Commerce Commission, and to appoint a captain in the Army, with a file of 10 soldiers armed with loaded muskets, to regulate railroad rates by private conferences with the presidents of the railroads.

21

They agree to reduce the membership of the United States Senate by 50% and of the House of Representatives by 75%, and to provide military funerals, with General Pershing in attendance in full uniform, for the members eliminated.

22

They agree to burn Harvard University.

23

They agree to shove Cal Coolidge, Henry Cabot Lodge and Charles E. Hughes into the Army.

24

They agree to serve without pay, to provide their own subsistence, and to remain in office, regardless of the Constitutional limitation, until assassinated.

§ 2

*Criticism Again.*—The doctrine that every critic worth reading is primarily an artist—that his fundamental aim is not to ascertain the truth, or to mete out justice, or to defend the maxims of Aristotle, or the Ten Commandments, or the statutes of the Harvard Corporation, or the Harrison Anti-Narcotic Act, or the Mann Act—this doctrine seems to give a great deal of offense to pedagogues, and every time one of them mentions it he mourns. Always he makes the accusation that it relieves the critic of his most important duty, to wit, the duty of telling his readers what the thing he criticises is, and how far it carries out its pretension, and how it relates itself to other things in the same category, or presumably in the same category. The answer here, of course, is that no such duty exists. Its existence, indeed, is no more than a delusion of pedagogues, who invariably labor under the notion that they have said something about this or that when they have given it a name. That delusion is responsible for all of the so-called "criticism" that pedagogues write—the heavy, soggy essays upon Matthew Arnold, Poe as a poet, Browning as a philosopher, the Pre-Raphaelites, Hensley, Schiller, Ibsen, Whitman, Milton, Herrick, Molière—in brief, all the blowsy efforts to reach "definitive judgments" that such tedious wind-jammers delight in. What is accomplished by such "definitive judgments"? Abso-

lutely nothing. Prof. Dr. Sherman's elaborate treatise upon Joaquin Miller will never convince any intelligent man that Miller was an important writer, nor will the same author's effort to fit Ralph Waldo Emerson into the Iowa æsthetic and gnosiology ever stop any intelligent man from reading Emerson for himself, and enjoying him more or less. Such "criticism" invariably fails of its ostensible purpose. In so far as it has any validity and significance at all, it is not as jurisprudence but as work of art. In brief, the pedagogue, when he essays criticism, becomes an artist in spite of himself. As a moral man, of course, he avoids the sin of being a good artist, but nevertheless he is, within the limits set by his superstitions, an artist.

What separates good critics from bad ones is simply the fact that the former are sound enough artists to make the matter they discuss seem charming. It is by this route that they induce their readers to look into it further, and so achieve their function as catalyzers. This function is not to be confused with the pedagogical. It is infinitely more urbane and expansive. Dryden was surely no schoolmaster, even *in petto*, but when he set down his views about Shakespeare in his beautiful and ingratiating prose he interested more readers in the Bard than a whole herd of pedagogues could have mustered, and so, despite the chill that often got into his enthusiasm, he probably did more than any other man to rescue the greatest of English poets from his Restoration days neglect. What a palpable artist finds interesting is very apt to seem interesting to all persons of taste and education; what a mere birchman advocates is apt to arouse their instinctive aversion. They do not want to be told precisely what to think about the thing discussed; all they want to be told is that it is worth examining. Every effort to lay down immutable conclusions, to state impeccable principles, to instruct them in their moral and æsthetic duties—in other words, every

effort to think for them, as a college tutor thinks for a sophomore, and a professor for a tutor, and a university president for a professor, and a board of trustees for a president—is bound to annoy them and chase them away. Despite all the “definitive judgments” that pedants have pronounced upon Walt Whitman, almost always unfavorably, he continues to live and to grow. And despite all their herculean efforts to hold up Howells, he is dead. That is simply because artists are interested in Whitman intensely, and in Howells not at all.

## § 3

*Notes from an Unpublished Diary.—*

1. The bravery of women! How hard they strive to love the men they marry!

2. Children, as they grow older and come to know the world, peculiarly reserve their greater admiration and love for that one of their parents whose life was corrupted by weaknesses and who, in the pathos of distance, thus appears to them a more charming and wistful figure than the other and nobler parent.

3. The actor, by the very nature of his craft, must be popular or perish. Hence the actor, save on rare occasions, is not logically an artist and cannot conduct himself as one.

4. There is a type of man who, consciously possessed of an inferior mind, seeks to make himself effective in a conversation by resorting to contradictions. In contradicting his superiors he achieves for himself the little moments of self-importance and personal reassurance that in straightforward, honest and intelligent argument would be wholly out of his reach.

5. Of the two loves—that which is felt deeply and that which is simulated—the second becomes the stronger with the passing of time. A woman, for example, forgets the grand passion of her life in the paraphrased and substitute love that has bought her a husband, a home and, with the flood of the years, peace and ease and a remote tranquillity.

## § 4

*Optimistic Note: Five Years After.*  
—From a circular entitled “The Patriotism of Saving,” issued by the Bureau of Publicity of the Treasury Department in 1918:

The epoch of conservation upon which we are now entering will not have the spacious picturesqueness of the epoch of exploitation which we are leaving behind. But it will not be without its compensations. Greed, which has been such a dominating motive in our industrial growth, *will necessarily come to play a smaller part*, because greed is waste. Fewer men will work merely for money, *and more will work for love of work, for love of country, and for the gratitude of their fellows.*

## § 5

*My Country, 'Tis of Thee.*—Sings Ko-Ko in “The Mikado”: “. . . Then the idiot who praises, with enthusiastic tone, all centuries but this, and every country but his own.”

I fear that I, for one, have in the past been not wholly free from the good Ko-Ko's disfavor, particularly as regards the second article of his animadversion. I have praised, with enthusiastic tone, English letters, French drama, German beer and music, Hungarian girls, Italian art, Turkish morals, Danish pastry, Swedish bathtowels, Greek sculpture, Spanish wines, Russian ballets, Swiss Alps and cheese, Dutch painting and Cuban cigars, as opposed to the like products of my own native land. I have praised, with not less enthusiastic tone, the British form of government as opposed to that of my own country, the free gayety of the French people as opposed to the blue and restricted gayety of my own people, the tolerance of the church of Italian Rome as opposed to the bigotry of the Methodist domination of the United States, and the integrity of the German nation as opposed to the hypocrisy of my own nation. If all this has set me down as an idiot, an idiot, gents, I am. But, whether it be true that I am and have been an idiot or not, it now seems to me to be time to call a halt to the

current sweeping disparagement, on the part of certain raucous and misguided citizens, of a Republic that, for all its obvious and transparent defects, has yet perhaps as many things to recommend it as any other country warmed by the sunshine of an all-wise and forgiving God.

I resent the suppressed snickers of the butler that greet the United States whenever its name is mentioned at an alien dinner table. I resent the intimation of cultivated foreigners—and cultivated Americans no less—that the United States is a mere ethical and æsthetic outhouse for the obscene use of themselves and others like them. This is hardly the case. The United States may be run by rogues, but so is France, and so is Italy, and so is England. It may be a money-grubbing nation; so is France, and so is Italy, and so is England. It may be worked for all it is worth by profiteers; so is present-day Germany. And it may exalt the stockbroker above the artist and the automobile manufacturer above the conductor of a symphony orchestra; so, as a nation, does almost every other nation under the heavens. These are absurd charges. A nation, whatever its name, and whatever the color of its flag, is at bottom, and essentially, a mere mob. And a mob is always cheap, always shoddy, and infinitely ignorant. One thinks of a country, one's own or someone's else, not in terms of the millions of dolts and doodles who compose it, but in terms of its minority of respectable, educated, civilized men. My country has such men as other countries have them. It has them perhaps in not such great number, but it is getting more of them year by year. The old order changeth. The younger generation, so to speak, is not only knocking at the back door; it is already in the kitchen, with the cook on its knee. . . . The sound of artillery is in the air.

But enough of such prophecy, in all probability wrong. Let the band strike up with the existing facts. The United States is today, as it has been for the

last ten years, the most thoroughly comfortable country to live in that one can find in the atlas. Its trains, taxicab service, bathrooms, ventilating systems, street buses, subways, elevated roads, hotels (in the aggregate), street-cleaning devices, the innumerable small things that contribute to make daily life easy and enduring—these are not matched by any other country. There is not a railroad in all of Europe one-fiftieth so well managed and so well run as the Pennsylvania. There isn't one that serves as respectable food in its dining-cars as the Baltimore and Ohio. There aren't in the world as satisfactory taxicabs as the original American "Yellows." Aside from the Ritz hotels, which are the same wherever one finds them, the United States can match every Adlon with a half dozen Plazas, every Bayerischer-Hof with a half dozen Statlers. The American bathroom—and here recall George Moore's celebrated philosophy—makes every other bathroom look like a country shanty amid the sunflowers. American heating apparatus, American barber-shops, American writing paper, American bootblackening impresarios, American telephone service (in every large city save New York), American elevators, American drugstores, American coins and currency—these, too, lead the world in point of merit and efficiency.

One need not guffaw at the crass materialness of such an argument. It is only the poseur who pretends that these are not, many of them, of a high importance in the scheme of life of mortal man and in his ever-present quest for tranquillity of mind, peace of spirit, and bodily ease. Let the disbeliever try to find a decent pair of garters in Europe when he has broken the pair he brought over with him from America; let him go and have his hair cut; let him hurriedly try to buy a shirt that fits him; let him try his luck at having an aching tooth pulled or filled; let him try to find a comfortable pair of European shoes; let him try to get a satisfactory witch hazel to use after

shaving; let him search for a strikable match in France, an ungreasy dish in Italy, a damp cigar in England, a dry bed sheet in Norway, a pen that he can write with in Greece, a mild cigarette in Russia, a hair brush in Spain, a dose of castor oil in Rumania, a decent cup of coffee in Portugal, or the most necessary if unmentionable article of human comfort in Denmark—let him essay this repertoire of likes and needs, or any part of it, and then ask him—if he is one part human—whether he cares to see New York harbor again, and how soon!

But have done with such ignoble things, and on to the higher reaches. The general literary taste of the United States at the present time—comparing the list of fiction and non-fiction best sellers with the same lists, where they are available, in Europe—is superior to that of England, France, Germany or Italy. Save alone Berlin, the dramatic taste of New York is at the present time considerably higher than that of any European capital. It is five times superior to that of London, and three times superior to that of Paris. America provides a larger and more lucrative audience for opera, symphony concerts and the recitals of first-rate musicians than any other country. The level of intelligence and artistic perception is very much lower in the higher stratum of the American people than in the same stratum of the European, but the mass of one country is not much different, as I have hereinbefore observed, from the mass of another. The American yokel and the German peasant, the American boob and the English boob, the American hick and the French hick are brothers in ignorance under their skins. The difference between the obscene show that the United States and that, say, France provides is simply the difference between the show that Barnum and Bailey's circus provides on the one hand and that Walter L. Main's provides on the other. It is merely a matter of magnitude. The essentials are common to both.

Our politics are a vulgar shambles?

So are the French. Our foreign policy is hypocritical? Look to England's! Our society is a cheap cuckooing of the English? True enough; there a clay pipe breaks to the credit of the score of the opposition. Our art is still in a crude state of development. Again true; but it is making progress. The American short story leads the world; the American etching is rapidly forging to the modern front rank; the American Victor Herbert is the peer of Lehar or Eysler or Kalmann or Fall; the American novel gains stature and dignity steadily, steadily. Dreiser, Cabell, Lewis, Hergesheimer, Cather come on apace. And to return briefly to the shorter form of fiction, there is not a writer in Europe today doing better work than the American Ruth Suckow. American criticism, on the higher levels, if inferior to the English and German, is miles ahead of the French and Spanish. American sculpture and painting and music are still either downright bad or in the process of finding themselves. These lie in the lap of time.

The France of today is in the hands of self-seeking politicians; the Germany in the hands of profiteers; the England in the hands of clever and unscrupulous business men. If the United States, in turn, is in the hands of knaves and rascals—and what is worse, ignoramuses—where the great difference to a man with his eyes to the stars and with a cellar full of pre-prohibition Scotch, gin, wine and beer?

## § 6

*Two Definitions.*—Atheist: one who is not half so atheistic as he says he is. Christian: one who is not half so Christian as he tries to look.

## § 7

*The Artist Under the Republic.*—My acquaintance with artists of all sorts, and particularly with artists of the literary and musical varieties, is pretty extensive. I must know, more or less

well, fully five hundred of them, of whom perhaps four-fifths are Americans. Among them are many of the men and women who are commonly viewed as the hopes of the national letters. I also know a great many business men, some of them very rich. My conclusion, weighing the one group against the other, is that the best brains of the country are going into commerce, finance and industry—that the young American who goes in for the fine arts today is, on the whole, inferior to the young American who goes in for trade.

Such a statement, coming from a professional literary gent—more, from a professional reviler of business men—is bound to strike many readers as a heavy attempt at irony. It is nothing of the sort; I make it perfectly seriously. But mark clearly, I prithee, what I say, and do not add anything to it. I say that the best brains of the country are *going into* business; I do not say that business develops those brains or utilizes them in anything properly describable as an effective manner. On the contrary, it seems to me that business, even more than such degrading professions as the clerical, the legal and the pedagogical, tends to debase and corrupt its personnel. The intellectual equipment that a young man takes into it is seldom if ever improved; he is lucky if it is not wrecked. Thus, all business men over 40 are apt to be Babbitts, and most of those over 60 are idiots. But the youngsters in the lower ranks—the youths just out of college—are certainly not inferior, taking one with another, to the youngsters in the lower ranks of the arts. If I had to choose between spending six days and six nights listening to a group of young bond salesmen and the same time listening to a group of young poets, painters or musicians, I'd choose the bond salesmen instantly, and so would every other prudent and unbiased man.

It is commonly assumed that the thing which draws young men into business is the desire for money—in brief, avarice. But even if this were true—which I doubt, as I shall show—

it would not serve to differentiate young business men from the young men who go into the arts or into the so-called learned professions, for many of the latter are quite as hot for money as the most ardent of bond salesmen. I have known, in my time, practically all of the more important contemporary American dramatists, many of them intimately. In the whole lot I can't recall a single one who began the writing of plays for any æsthetic reason; one and all they were attracted to the craft by its grotesquely excessive rewards. No other art, of course, save that of the bad actor, is so well rewarded, but in even the most austere of them, in the United States, there are rewards sufficient to satisfy any normal man's desire for money. I know novelists who are paid \$50,000 and even \$100,000 for a single novel, what with the moving-picture rights, the serial rights, and so on. I know architects, certainly not of the first rank, who make \$75,000 a year. Even poets, if they attract public notice, may make a great deal of money in America, for though their actual poems may bring them in no more than \$1 a line, they are always in demand for lectures, or as lovers, and often receive large honoraria.

No, it is not the mere lust for money that takes the flower of American youth into business of one sort or another; it is something far less obvious. That something is to be found in the fact that the public position of the business man in the United States, instead of being inferior to that of the artist, as it is in all civilized countries, is notably and apparently immovably superior—that he is regarded with greater respect, not only by the mob, but also by the great majority of presumably educated Americans, and that in consequence he gets a far more satisfying response to the egoistic cravings that are in all of us. Mere money never made any genuinely superior man work; it is the incentive, not of the superior, but of the inferior—in brief, of Socialists, laborers, drudges. What stimulates the man of better mettle is simply the desire to

differentiate himself from these sordid swine, to win recognition and respect, to be distinguished. Obviously, the kinds of distinction that success in business brings are more palpable and brilliant in the United States than the kinds of distinction that are brought by success in the fine arts. The successful manufacturer or financier is respected, not only by the great masses of the plain people—whose adulation, perhaps, is no more agreeable to him than it would be to a Beethoven—but also by the minority that passes for intelligent. In brief, he is respected by the sort of people that he himself respects—and that is the highest reward that any human being can hope to attain in this world.

Perhaps I may be forgiven for illustrating the point by intruding upon two living men, neither of them known to me. I name J. Pierpont Morgan II and Dr. Jacques Loeb. Dr. Loeb, all things considered, is probably the most distinguished man of science who has ever lived in the United States—a man whose contributions to biological knowledge have been fundamental and of the utmost value—in fine, a man of the very first importance among us. Mr. Morgan is simply a successful profiteer. He inherited a great name and a great fortune, and has augmented the latter without damaging the former. There are plenty of other bankers in the United States who have made as much money, and a great many who are far more intelligent. So far as the record shows, he has never, in all his life, said a word worth hearing or done anything beyond the imagination of one of the clerks in his bank. He is competent at his business, but certainly not a genius. His mental existence, outside his pawnshop, is apparently that of any other Babbitt.

But now ask yourself a few questions about these two men. Suppose the two went to Washington on the same train: which would be received first by the President of the United States? Suppose the two fell ill on the same day: to which house would the

Chief Justice of the United States send solicitous inquiries? Suppose the two addressed letters to Bishop Manning or the president of any American university: which would be answered first? Suppose the two visited the public gallery of the Senate: before which would the learned Senators posture and show off their tricks? Suppose the two gave dinners on the same evening and invited the members of the American Academy of Arts and Letters: which would bag the larger posse of intellectual giants? (I name some members of the Academy in order to assist you in answering: John S. Sargent, Henry Van Dyke, Woodrow Wilson, Henry Cabot Lodge, Nicholas Murray Butler, Owen Wister, Augustus Thomas, William Gillette, Elihu Root.) Suppose, finally, the two died on the same day: which would get the longer obituaries in the newspapers?

I am not speaking here of the *public* position of the two men—that is, of their position in the view of the mob. I am speaking of their position in the view of the superior minority. Dr. Loeb, estimated by any conceivable human standard, is a vastly better man than Mr. Morgan. He is infinitely better informed; he is infinitely more intelligent; he devotes his energies to enterprises that are more useful and altruistic than Morgan's; his work confers far more honor and dignity upon the United States. Yet it must be plain that the reward he gets is very much smaller. The sense of his importance is simply lacking. No doubt Bishop Manning, or Chief Justice Taft, or Secretary Hughes, or President Lowell, or even poor Harding, if pinned down to it, would admit that he is a worthy man, and perhaps even the editor of the *New York Times*, mistaking him for a member of Kuhr, Loeb & Co., would be disposed to say something nice about him, but to none of these men, nor to any other Americans save a few fellow-scientists and amateurs of eminence, is he the brilliantly distinguished figure that Morgan is. In no American assemblage, save perhaps one of biolo-

gists, would he be given the head of the table with Morgan in the room.

§ 8

*Points of Departure.*—1. I observe that the man who recently wrote a long and profound essay proving that W. L. George, D. H. Lawrence, George Bernard Shaw and Arnold Bennett, "for all their affectation to the contrary," know nothing about women, last week married a chorus girl.

2. Bad authors often have finer intent than good authors. Croce's reiterated emphasis on intent seems to me absurd. An author's intent is negligible. It is only the execution, the final piece of work, that counts.

3. Beauty is formless. Art is form applied to beauty.

4. There is only in the rarest of cases such a thing as loyalty in women. A man will remain loyal to an ideal even where he finds that it is no longer an ideal; a woman remains loyal only so long as the object of her loyalty, whatever it may be, remains fixed and stable. And even then her loyalty is at times cast o'er with doubt.

5. With the possible exception of Chopin, there has never been a great composer who had clean finger-nails.

6. The happiest time of a man's life is not, as has been said, when his illusions have gone completely, but rather when his illusions are just beginning to scoot around the corner.

7. In Harding the United States has taken a dose of bicarbonate of soda to cure its dose of Wilsonian wood alcohol.

8. A man sometimes enters upon a new love affair to protect himself from

the irritatingly enduring sentiment of the previous one.

9. It is the most puzzling of human paradoxes that one often feels the most spiritually depressed in the moments of one's highest material happiness.

10. No criticism can be more interesting than the life of the critic himself is interesting.

11. The victories of peace endure only until someone invents a new gun.

12. It is seldom that the beauty of a woman's face can survive her laughter.

13. No woman can stand a sentimental man at the dinner table.

14. Nothing surprises one more than the periodic sudden and inexplicable shifts in one's tastes and likes. A man is at such times practically a stranger to himself. He is at a loss to comprehend himself. The phenomenon has happened at one time or another to all of us.

15. Some boys go to college and eventually succeed in getting out. Others go to college and never succeed in getting out. The latter are called professors.

§ 9

*The Higher Learning in America.*—When the Rev. Dr. Billy Sunday, the whooping evangelist, recently arrived in Columbia, S. C., to alarm the white and black morons, the general chairman of the committee appointed to welcome him was Dr. W. D. Melton, president of the University of South Carolina. Dr. Melton was accompanied to the station by Dr. W. S. Currell, former president of the University and now dean of the Graduate School.



**A**LL aphorisms upon women fall to pieces the moment one falls in love.



# Creation

*By Roda Roda*

**A**FTER God had finished creating the universe, a few remnants were left:  
the figure of an angel, the brain of a rabbit, the heart of a wolf.  
God wondered just how he might utilize them.  
"I have an idea!" cried Satan. "Let us combine them into a wife for Adam!"



## Hurricane Night

*By John McClure*

**N**OMADS of night and storm  
Riding this spectral surge,  
Dreams in irrevocable form  
From shadows emerge.

Foam batters my feet,  
Breakers leap at my head,  
Irrevocable dreams repeat  
All the words we have said.

You, haggard for love,  
What do you bring me here?  
I am the jetty of passion,  
I am the weir.

Shadows enshroud this storm.  
Thundering gusts recall  
Dreams in irrevocable form,  
You leading them all.



# His Last Appearance

*By Gordon Seagrove*

## I

**W**HILE the train bearing Miss Letitia Spangler, spinster, and her amazing nephew, Master Oswald Layton, puffed across the billious prairie toward Chicago, the Saturday journals of that windy metropolis, yellow and otherwise, agreed that a singular and delightful treat was to be vouchsafed the lovers of music in the appearance of Master Oswald in a program of religious music and folk ballads at Symphony Hall on the following night.

It was, they inferred, a chance of a lifetime to view one whom the critics as a unit had decreed the best boy soprano in the country; an opportunity to gorge their souls and hear, ere manhood overtook him, the sweet, liquid notes from the throat of a youth—one of Chicago's own—who had delighted two continents with his rare talent. There were even pictures of Oswald, his golden hair bobbed, his pale, oval face staring seraphically out over an Eton collar and tie, a saintly expression luring the public to come and adventure in the realms of pure esthetics.

Time was when such blazons would have delighted the heart of the boy soprano. But now, sprawled out over his Pullman chair, he was pervaded with a deep sense of irritation at life in general and the musical life in particular. All day strange fires had been kindling within him—fires which he could not understand. His voice, too, had broken once or twice, though he had no cold. Altogether he viewed himself with contempt; he was beginning to hate his rôle of artist, his bobbed hair, his blue velvet pantaloons; and in disgust his

patent leather boots beat an irritated tattoo on the steam pipes.

Miss Spangler, glancing up from her book, gave him a severe look.

"That will do, Oswald," she said sharply. "It isn't becoming."

"It ain't hurting anything," the boy soprano protested. "I won't hurt the old steam pipes."

"It isn't becoming," his aunt decided with emphasis. "Besides, it annoys the old gentleman who just retired to the smoker."

"Pooh! What do I care for the old gentleman! Gosh, I wish there weren't any old gentlemen in the world, Aunt Letty. They ought to kill old gentlemen off. Pooh—old gentlemen! I wish . . ."

Words failed him; one could only conjecture what worse fate he was planning for them. His aunt, with a weary sigh, resumed reading. Oswald, denied audience, examined the floor studiously. It revealed nothing. Presently, however, his eye perceived an alarmed cockroach fleeing for cover. With almost no effort he captured the prize, and holding it between thumb and forefinger, passed a beguiling moment removing, with sinister deliberation, its legs. A black look from the heavy woman three seats away decided him to put the roach out of its misery. The steamed window next engaged his endeavor, and on it he was attempting an offhand thumbnail sketch of Sitting Bull when his aunt's fishy eye met his again.

"Oswald!" she cried, dismayed. "You wretched boy! Are you utterly without sense? Think of your throat! Come 'way from that window this instant. I can feel the draft from here."

The martyr obeyed. "I'd just like to be left alone one minute, just one little minute. That's all. Just one minute."

Miss Spangler, eyeing him fixedly, interrupted:

"Aunt Letty doesn't want to nag you, dear, but you must know that your Chicago engagement is most important—most important. And, dear, your throat is *so* susceptible! More than that, Oswald, you promised me you'd be a very good boy."

"You said you'd get me a cat," he pouted. "You never got it, either."

"You know very well, Oswald Layton, that you can't carry a cat on tour. There's no place for it. What a boy! And besides," she weighed her words, "boys don't carry cats."

"Tom cats? Boys don't carry Tom cats?" What heresy, Oswald wondered, was this? "I don't want a *she* cat. I want a Tom cat. I don't see why I can't have a Tom cat, Aunt Letty. You said when we left Cleveland . . ."

The harried woman gave it up.

"If you'll behave yourself," she cried irritably, "you shall have a Tom cat, though heaven knows where I am going to get one, and what we'll do with it after we get it."

Oswald thought a moment. "I want to have my picture taken with it—we can put a bow around its neck. All big stars do."

It was a keen stroke. Miss Spangler smiled; the boy had an idea or two that might be worth carrying out. After a time, satisfied that peace for the moment was at hand, she resumed reading.

The boy soprano surveyed her critically, finally turning away in disgust; many times before he had heard her honeyed promises. That fond desire, a Tom cat, he felt sure she would never fulfil. What a horrible world it was! Moodily he stared through the window and black thoughts smote his soul. For four years he had been toted from one city to another, the idol of chattering women, the center of interested critics and music teachers who talked a strange

language and exhaled strange odors; he had been kissed and fondled, gaped at and pampered. For four years his throat—his precious throat—had been the never-ending bane of his existence; it had been wrapped, sprayed, heated, treated, soothed; he ate, slept and moved about in terms of what was good for his throat. As his mind reviewed this horrible past a mad hatred for it all seized him. He was tired of the whole business. He wanted to be free. He longed to do as other boys did, numbering among his major desires cigarettes—chewing tobacco even . . . a long sigh escaped him.

"Restless, dear?" his aunt inquired without looking up. "Oh, well—we shall be in soon."

"No," he explained with a long face, "but I don't think I shall sing again after tonight. I don't think I'll ever sing." Strange thoughts were hardening Oswald's heart.

His aunt sat bolt upright. "Oswald! What do you mean? Are you ill?"

He gulped. "I feel funny inside—here." He indicated the abdomen.

Miss Spangler paled; her bread and butter were being threatened.

"We'll see Dr. Sparrow the moment we get in! You'll have time for a nap, too, before the recital."

Oswald saw his frightful blunder.

"Maybe I ate too much," he ventured, waiting for the effect. "It doesn't hurt hardly any now."

"More than likely." Miss Spangler was relieved. The boy soprano breathed freely again; he had "put it over," but it was a close shave.

Again he stared out of the window, a sense that all things were intolerable stealing over him. It could not go on. . . . It would not go on! Time passed. Suburbs of the Midwest metropolis slid past the windows: he regarded them sourly. Presently, to his eager ears came sweetly the sound of ribald laughter eddying back from the smoking-compartment. The boy soprano stirred. Then he looked at his aunt; she was dozing. He dropped his Tam-o'-Shanter on her lap; there was not a flicker of an

eyelid; and silently he rose and left his seat.

In the smoking-compartment four genial and noisy gentlemen returning from the Elks' convention at Buffalo were regaling themselves with some of the best ones that they had heard in years; from one Rabelaisian height to another they hopped lightly and with elan, their passage made easy by occasional "snorts" from a bottle which the porter had assured them was real Scotch. A bulbous gentleman, known to posterity as Mr. Elkin, a fitting name, seemed to be chairman of the little group.

"You know Gus Saylor?" he said, beaming pleasantly. "Well, I've yet to meet Gus when he didn't have something good to spring. Told me he picked this one up from that blonde buyer at Meyerbaum's in Cincinnati."

They all knew Gus; they all would have liked to know the blonde buyer. As one they bent their heads closer. Mr. Elkin began dreamily, bringing ere long the amazing saga to a lurid climax. A loud chorus of "ha ha's" filled the room; it resounded to the slapping of knees.

"Ain't it a pippin?" said Mr. Elkin, seeking approbation.

"A knockout," chortled Mr. Sam Dinger. "You pick 'em good, you old appleknocker."

"Count on Gus for sompin' good." This from Mr. Harry Hartz, master mind for Illinois on Greenglo Silks. "That reminds me of one. . . ."

At this juncture they noted Master Oswald Layton, fairest of all fair boy sopranos, his seraphic face and Etonic gentility a modest note where Casanova would have felt entirely at home.

"Well, I'm damned if it ain't Little Lord Fauntleroy himself," muttered Mr. Elkin, taking in the blue corduroy.

"Better pipe down on the stories," added Mr. Hartz parentally; he had two boys at home.

Oswald regarded first Mr. Elkin. "Don't call me 'Little Lord Fauntleroy,'" he said coldly, "I don't like it. 'Spose you think I'm a mamma's boy

with these clothes. I'm not. I'm pretty tough!"

Then he fixed Mr. Hartz with a baleful glance. "Go ahead and tell your old jokes." Then lying lightly: "I bet I've heard most of 'em anyway." He sank into a vacant chair.

"Hear that, Jim? He thinks he's heard 'em all."

The boy soprano then achieved a coup. Having no father, he created one. Not an ordinary father, but a man devoid of morals, a parent who could give the world cards and spades as a raconteur of the racy, the bizarre, the amazing.

"Pooh!" Oswald managed easily. "My father tells me lots worse than that last one. That was nothing. He tells me all of them. I guess I've heard pretty near a million stories. I like them."

Dumfounded for the moment, the returning Elks asked themselves what manner of father was this, so depraved as to regale a thirteen-year-old boy with epics such as now were beclouding the atmosphere, then, viewing it as one of the world's strange phenomena, they returned to their entertainment, accepting the boy soprano as a future frater in the horned brotherhood.

Never, as far back as he could remember, had Oswald so enjoyed himself! His eyes sparkled. His pulses thrilled. It was a feast of the guilty gods and he missed not a bite, and though he understood not one-half—nay, one-tenth—of what he heard, he was enough of a dissembler to laugh at the right time. Pretending indifference with the aid of a cigar butt which he rolled and unrolled, he drank it in, his memory, trained to recall entire operatic scores, retaining those bits which the returning Elks voted the most satisfying. There was one in particular. . . .

"Say it over again, will you?" begged Oswald, "just once. My father will like it. Just once."

Mr. Hartz hesitated.

"Go on, you old appleknocker, say it for the kid," Mr. Elkin urged.

Mr. Hartz began to hum a slight

accompaniment. His offering was a bit in verse with a double climax. He had no more than finished when Oswald, looking up with a premonitory feeling of impending doom, beheld the inflamed eye of Miss Spangler.

"Oswald!" she cried, her eyes blazing. "Come out of this filthy den at once! Now you move!"

And before the intoxicated soprano realized what was happening, she strode in, yanked him from his seat and with a parting "Beasts!" to the antlered four, bundled him through the door—forever away from this humid scene of romance and intrigue.

Twenty minutes later the train deposited upon the sunny reaches of Michigan Avenue a sorely tried spinster manager and her seething protege, the greatest boy soprano in all the world.

## II

It was Miss Spangler's plan to go immediately to the fashionable hotel on the city's near north side and there see to the matter of conditioning her charge for the recital to come. This conditioning called for a hot and cold bath, fresh linen, combed hair, pared nails, a nap, and on awaking, a running fire of command, counsel and admonition. All, all were as tortures of the damned in the boy soprano's opinion.

But as his aunt waited for a taxicab she met a large, busty woman with a broad smile and a practical manner. Oswald didn't like her.

"Emily Green!" cried Miss Spangler ecstatically. "Of all people!"

And as they wrapped themselves in embrace Oswald's heart beat high with hope; there was something almost providential about it; his nostrils sensed freedom ahead.

"My dear Letty, we simply must talk," urged Mrs. Green, "this very afternoon. We'll tea."

Aunt Letty demurred; there was Oswald, and the conditioning process. Mrs. Green held out for the tea.

"Great Hat!" she argued, "he's big enough to look out for himself."

Although his expression was innocent, Oswald thanked Mrs. Green; a pleasant woman after all. "Go ahead, Aunt Letty," he suggested mildly. "I'll take my bath. I'm kind of tired from that stuffy old train."

Torn between gossip and duty, Miss Spangler had a hard time of it. Duty lost.

"We'll take Oswald to the hotel first and register," she decided.

It was a foolish thing to do; even Oswald recognized that. His aunt's steps had scarcely been lost in the corridor before the stiff room became prison to a body that was formed for greater things. Refreshed by his bath—he had kept that much of the bargain—his hate for the yoke about his neck grew and festered. Pacing up and down the room, his mind was a prey to hot, anarchistic thoughts that grew, multiplied and carried weight. In short, the chains of Oswald's art were getting too heavy for him to bear. At last toleration ceased, and, seizing his Tam-o'-Shanter suddenly, he strode out of the room and took the elevator to the lobby.

"You may tell Miss Spangler in 204 that her nephew has gone for a walk and will meet her at the theatre," he said, gravely presenting the key. Then he stepped briskly out into the warm sunshine.

## III

HAD the boy soprano turned north from the hotel he would have encountered nothing more spirited than be vies of well-dressed young men and women out for a Sunday stroll. Instead, he walked west toward the Italian quarter, a district where at least once a week a merry son of Old Italy meets his Maker without interference from the police. It was a neighborhood in which the odor of garlic mixed with that of shotgun smoke, a neighborhood, in short, admittedly and outrageously tough. Here, Oswald elected to see life.

In his dainty blue velvet suit he was a unique figure in those dirty streets,

and many a drab curtain was drawn aside while dark, Latin faces peered out at him curiously.

As he went westward the houses thinned out. A vacant lot, sunk below the sidewalk level, half filled with dirty water and surrounding a cluster of forbidding-looking lean-tos came abeam. Oswald stopped; it was such a shack as "Two Gun Pete" might inhabit. He gazed at it with entire approval.

As he looked, his pale blue eyes expanded. For picking a hangdog course toward one of the dwellings, was a cat. No ordinary cat such as you might find basking in the sun on a householder's porch was this, but a lean cat, a long cat, a ferocious, suspicious, ill-treated, mangy cat with all the terrors and experience of three years of alley life expressed in its pale saffron eyes—a cat as dirty as an ash-bin, as black as a coffin.

Oswald emitted a cry of unalloyed delight. Some strange instinct dictated caution; he approached craftily.

"Here, kitty, kitty, kitty," he clucked fatuously.

The dull beast stopped and regarded him, a look of somber inquiry in its eyes.

"Come, kitty, kitty, kitty," repeated the boy soprano splashing slowly through the dirty puddles. "Nice kitty, nice kitty." He was almost on top of it.

The quarry hesitated no longer; giving him a baleful look of hatred, it bounded into the nearest shack, Oswald, in natty blue, but a step behind. Round and round the dark room he chased it, until the harried beast, winded and panic-stricken, backed into a corner from which Oswald finally dragged it, spitting and clawing, to the open air of the lot.

"You old appleknocker, you!" he said over and over. "You old appleknocker. I got you, didn't I, you old appleknocker?"

He liked the word. Evidently a term of endearment, he had rescued it that forenoon from the smoking compartment. The cat, however, was in no

way mollified by this show of pride and tenderness; it continued to spit and claw.

"I'll fix you, you old appleknocker," he threatened. And he did. Ripping the wire from a cast-off bit of stove-pipe, he constructed a fair halter and hung it about the scrawny neck of his protege, which he immediately dropped to the ground. Then with the beleaguered animal whining and hanging back, he resumed his journey.

"Come on, Appleknocker," he entreated from time to time.

His course brought him again into the Italian district. Fat Italian women holding their babies in gay shawls spoke to their hawk-eyed, slovenly masters and smiled at the sight of him. Oswald heeded them not; he was used to audiences. Suddenly, almost directly in front of him, two figures scampered from a tenement, one of them a boy, the other a girl.

Oswald paused and stared at her; she was the prettiest little girl he had ever seen. Her coal black hair framed a dark oval face out of which gleamed two great dark eyes; her figure was all soft young curves. And as Oswald regarded her, he turned first hot, then cold, the victim of a strange desire which two days ago he would have hooted down. He, Oswald, wanted to kiss that little girl! Woman—woman—was that the cause of his fierce unrest of the morning? The little girl, however, had no eyes for Oswald himself; they were feasting on his blue velvet suit. Satisfying herself as to its beauty, she then grew derisive.

"Look, Pasquale!" she demanded of her dirty escort, "ees got on ladies' pants! Ees got ladies' hair, too."

Pasquale grinned a fiendish grin: "Ees mama boy! Ees candy keed!"

"Mama boy! Candy keed!" the little girl made it a chorus. Immediately they began dancing around him, to be joined a moment later by two dirty Irish boys.

"Lookit them pants!" cried one. "They're silk! Silk pants on a boy—cripes!"

"O-o la, la! Ain't he sweet?" This from the other.

Love, tenderness, reason left Oswald. He withered under these insults. Doubling up one soft fist, he would have sailed into them, but he remembered Appleknocker, for the moment the apple of his eye. The prize must not be freed. Quickly he moored him to a fence picket, then with his blood boiling, he entered the fray.

"I ain't mamma's boy," he sobbed. "I ain't!"

"Ees talk like a lady, too!" cried the perceiving little girl triumphantly as he came rushing toward them.

Braver lads than the boy soprano had essayed fisticuffs in Milton Avenue with depressing results and Oswald fared no better than his predecessors. He fared worse. His first rebuff was a blow delivered by the madonna herself—a blow which made Oswald howl with pain and closed his eye.

"Quit! Quit!" he moaned, flailing away unscientifically with his tender fists.

Together they fell upon him, the dressy stranger within their gates. Arms waved. Legs intertwined. Oswald accounted for one enemy with a well-directed punch, but he was vanquished from the start. Sooner or later he would have to give up; very well then, let it be soon. And soon it was; bleeding and scratched he at last sat upright, a heavy weight across his midriff. But when the dust of battle had cleared from his eyes and he saw—delight of delights—that the weight was that of the bewitching little girl, he actually smiled.

"What's your name?" he demanded dizzily. "I like you. I like you lots."

The donna Mamie Colosini softened. She smiled. She told him. Then she fell to examining his suit.

"Ees so pretty," she said, as she helped him to his feet.

"I got another one at home. I got hundreds of them, I guess. I'll give you a couple."

She clapped her hands. It was a master stroke for Oswald; in a twink-

ling he had converted this beauteous enemy into a friend.

"You no gonna fight any more?" she asked archly.

Oswald shook his head.

"I don't like fights," he explained. "I'm always afraid I might kill somebody. I wouldn't want to kill anybody, you know."

The little girl laughed. "My pappa, ees kill peopla. Ees kill two peopla last wik. Fine man, gooda man, my pappa."

As this astounding confession fell from her lips, the boy soprano's eyes filled with boundless admiration. He was face to face with adventure itself, for was not she the child of a parent who slew people—two people at least—in cold blood?

For a moment he was simply speechless. Then all he could say was, "Does he, really?"

The donna nodded. "With shots guns," she added. Then taking Oswald's hand, she said, "Come! I give you wine and cakes an' let you see my pappa. Ees come home pretty soon."

Tingling with excitement, thirsting for a sight of this wonderful individual, Oswald untied the Appleknocker and with the little girl's hand in his, walked into the dingy tenement.

There in an untidy room on the threshold of high drama and face to face with a vis-a-vis so charming as to make him almost forget his wounds, the boy soprano decided once and for all that he was done with the world of music. But whether it was the old wine she gave him, or the fact that the demand for his presence in the recital hall within a very short time was to rob him of his only opportunity to see and shake hands with a real killer was responsible for this great decision, it would be hard to say. Certainly they had bearing on the means by which he proposed to accomplish his farewell bow—a means so unusual, so shocking, so melodramatic as to be almost epochal.

"Come with me, little girl!" he cried suddenly.

"You no wait for my pappa?"

He shook his head.

"I can't," he sighed. "I've got to sing at a big theatre tonight. You ought to hear me! I sing very well."

The little girl believed. And she came—toting a bottle of milk for the Appleknocker.

It was early when they arrived at the recital hall. Only the janitor was about.

"Let us in," demanded Oswald with authority. "I'm Oswald Layton. I'm going to sing here tonight. If you don't believe it look at my picture over there."

The janitor gave way. The donna Colisino watched her escort with new adoration. Together they entered.

"Sit here," he commanded and pushed her into a seat. "I must see that everything is all right on the stage."

There was a sinister light in his eyes as he clambered over the low trough; on his lips, too, a sinister smile—the smile of a plotting madman. "Come, Appleknocker," he coaxed; and pulling the frightened beast with one hand and holding the milk bottle in the other, he made a search of the stage until he found what he wanted—an old pan. Then his horrible plan became manifest. Turning to the small organ he took out a panel in its back, inserting through the opening the old pan which he then filled with milk.

"Come here, Appleknocker," he cried softly. "You dirty old Appleknocker."

The animal protested. The boy was adamant. Into the panel went the Appleknocker. It whined piteously a moment, then finding the milk, whined no more. Quietly Oswald replaced the panel; his work was done. Whistling an eerie ditty, he rejoined his new found companion.

"You wait here," he admonished her. "I'm going home and get a new suit for me—and one for you. You've got to hear me sing."

The belle of Milton Avenue smiled. Ecstatically the boy soprano moved away.

It was no ordinary rebuke that greeted him on his arrival at the hotel; it was the highly organized tirade of a

maddened, hysterical woman. But in the hurried conditioning process that followed his advent he bore the lash of her tongue with an indifference truly stoical. At times, it seemed from his expression, he was in a world far, far removed from such horrid realities, and in this mood Miss Spangler, fuming and upset, bore him off to the theatre.

#### IV

NEVER was there such a house! It was sold out—and sold out to as prosperous, intelligent, music-loving and convention bound an army of well-dressed, well-mannered ladies and gentlemen as had ever assembled in the old hall. Among the box holders were divines of note and their deacons (also of note), a handful of bankers, of heavy-jowled critics not a few, and any number of high-busted ladies familiar to the readers of society and club columns, with their stiff-shirted escorts, lords and masters in the world of business. All, all were in a mood for the delights they knew the boy soprano could provide. In short, it was a house for which a Garden, a Walska might be proud to sing.

Upon the stage the object of all this tribute walked about in a state of ineffable calm. There was something horrible about it as Miss Spangler would have immediately sensed had her nerves not been riddled by the day's alarms. The master smiled pleasantly to himself. All had gone well. His greatest fear—the apprehension that his aunt would run over their numbers before the recital actually began—had proved to be groundless. He had headed her off with a grimace and a fretful plea that his overwrought nerves wouldn't stand such a rehearsal.

Suddenly the lights went up. The light patter of conversation came to an end. The curtain rose. To a welcome rattle of applause his aunt walked upon the stage, seated herself at the organ. A pause, a nod, and then, dainty, beautiful, seraphic, the idol himself made

his appearance. He let the handclaps die. His first great moment was at hand.

Miss Spangler at the organ smiled encouragement. Slowly she pumped up the introduction. The first notes rang out in the hushed auditorium. The boy soprano opened his mouth as if to sing—it would only be a moment now! And then, at last, at last—it came! First a short, sharp wail, then more of them, many of them, gathering tone and color, volume and strength, until they reached a terrible and hideous climax in a prolonged shriek such as might issue from a victim of the rack or from an innocent man feeling the keen edge of the knife upon his neck. Inwardly the boy soprano rejoiced. He knew whence came those sounds. It was the Appleknocker, caught and tossed about between the heaving bellows of the organ—the Appleknocker pleading for his life.

Across his cherubic face flitted a shadow of annoyance—purely professional. Far, far below him he saw the little girl; solemnly he winked. He turned to Aunt Letty; she seemed about to burst. Then he looked at the audience; they were astounded, and uncomfortable, but too well bred to titter. Instead, they sat in embarrassed silence until a practical stage-hand removed the tortured Appleknocker from his house of grief. Again his eyes sought the little girl . . . he certainly would like to see her father. Nice little girl . . . he would show her that he could sing. His eye caught his aunt's; she was pedaling into the introduction again. Oswald launched into his work.

Never had he sung so superbly, it was technically perfect, beautifully correct; there was range, tone, color—everything! The audience sat entranced, spellbound. He talked to them. He made them feel through the suggestion of his rich, golden voice. Closing with a high aria he heard the ripple of applause begin in the gallery and then its thunderous torrent rushing at him from the parquet. Modestly he bowed with hate seething in his heart. Aunt Letty

bowed. Then she advanced to the edge of the proscenium.

"Master Layton will now play the accompaniment to one of his own compositions," she announced in a level, clear voice. It had always gone big—that simple little song; it was really what the audience most desired to hear. As he stepped back she whispered fiercely, "Your very best, Oswald—your very best!"

In another moment she was through the wings.

As the boy soprano advanced toward the piano there was a cold, fanatic look in his eyes. It was a look of superiority of deviltry, of contempt, of fiendish determination all in one. Calmly he sat down. Deliberately he gazed at the forest of white faces; never again would he view them from such a lofty eminence. Gently he laid his slim fingers on the keys, but his thoughts—his thoughts were back in the smoking compartment. The hour of his really great triumph had come; the moment of his manhood, his freedom was at hand. He struck the opening bar of a new, entirely new, tune. The audience leaned forward. He lifted his young fair head and began to sing. And this is what he sang:

*"Once in the parlor a sofa stood  
Where lovers made love as lovers  
should.*

*So far—so good!*

*Now in the parlor a cradle stands  
And a mother wrings her frantic hands,  
So far—no father!"*

He wound up with a delicate flourish, then wheeled round on the stool.

Upon the auditorium had fallen a hush as of death. It was a silence impressive and horrible, such as would occur should a bishop go unclothed down the main street of his parish. Not from a throat in that entire army of humiliated, dumfounded, stunned esthetes did one note rise. It was not to be expected; this contre-temps had been too brilliant, too stunning. The

boy soprano noted it all and was pleased. But there was yet more. There was no stopping him. In his eye as he walked down the stage was the spirit of a demon. He raised his hand.

"Ladies and gentlemen . . ." he said sweetly, "do not leave your seats, I pray. . . ."

And then to those well-regulated burghers, those beetle-browed critics, those ritual loving churchmen he told the succulent anecdote that Mr. Elkin, the returning Elk, had gleaned from Mr. Gus Saylor who had extracted it from the beautiful blonde buyer from Meyerbaum's in Cincinnati.

The depraved boy soprano did not wait for the well-bred demonstration

that followed his devastating coup. With one agile leap he cleared the trough and reached the little girl. Seizing her hand, he pulled and dragged her up the aisle and yanked her through an exit.

"Can't you hurry?" he hissed. "Can't you understand I want to see your papa?"

"Ees killa peopla," the little girl responded.

The boy soprano nodded expectantly. Then he looked back; over the lobby entrance he saw his name in incandescents. With a grunt of disgust he turned away. He would never see it again—never. He had made his farewell appearance—positively!

And Chicago agreed.



## In My Opinion

*By Amanda Benjamin Hall*

*THE Aged, sitting on their shelves,  
With knitting and the cat,  
Make talk of Youth among themselves,  
Deploring this and that. . . .*

*Youngsters, let them not abash  
Your lovely, witless school—  
They'd give their riches to be rash,  
And twenty, and a fool!*



**P**SYCHOANALYSIS is only as interesting as the subject under analysis. It may be worth while to pull an orchid apart, but who wants to probe a turnip?



**A** CLEVER woman sees the world eye to eye with a man; a wise one, knee to knee.



# Artful America

*By Ben Ray Redman*

I

WHILE reading in some magazine, not long ago, I came upon a glowing article wherein was described a club that has been formed for the encouragement of young artists in all fields, including even—if I understood aright—literature. I reread this account. A club for the encouragement of young artists! Before or after becoming such? I wondered. But that was an academic quibble merely. My interest, my surprise, rested on a broader base than that of trifling inquiry. Dimly I remembered hearing of some man who once sought profit by shipping Para rubber to Brazil; another tale there was of a fellow who sent a rusty tramp, with hope of selling it, into the river Clyde; and I recalled one of Jean Giradoux's characters who carried a Japanese doll from Paris to Japan; but, on my life, I could recall no folly quite analagous in sheer lack of all necessity to this conscious, purposeful "encouragement of young artists."

Reading the article, there flashed into my mind a picture of Provincetown, as seen in summertime, and enforcedly, in consequence of a necessary search for eatable bacon. There in the hard, sharp sunshine, along the narrow main street, clustered intimately around decaying docks or scattered individually along the curving strip of sand, there sprouted innumerable easels bearing white canvases, and before each of these there sat or stood a smocked or loosely trousered, open-shirted figure. The progress of a Ford was made halting by clusters of easel-bearers rushing earnestly toward fresh points of vantage;

and the street itself was lined by shops whose every window was a picture gallery in miniature. Signs, negligently crayoned on cardboard or more formally painted on swinging boards, announced that within these shops might be obtained all that the artist's head and hand could possibly desire. Boarding-house doors gushed with a colorful stream of Beardsley ties and Murger tams, while erstwhile hen-houses reflected the sun's rays from newly inserted northern windows of impressive magnitude. One heard a great, vague, universal sound: paint oozing from ten thousand tubes. Tourists, pausing, gaped with immoderate admiration at the poised hands that held the sacred brushes, and confessed humble bewilderment at the ensuing smears. One thought of France in wartime: here, too, a small native population was fattening on foreign troops—this time on the battalions of art. Decidedly, Provincetown was a place in which one bought bacon, and fled. A club for the encouragement of young artists!

And reading this article, I thought, too, of the burdened mail that flows into our magazines and publishing offices, the daily mail that carries the heart's blood of a thousand sturdy sons of Texas, and the virgin dreams of how many daughters of Nebraska! I thought of all the verses that were, at that very moment, palpitating under the passport of a two-cent stamp, of all the stories that had already consumed in postage any possible remuneration they might ever bring their authors. And I shuddered at thought of the returning tide, that was even then flowing back dispersedly, from editorial desks, into

the hamlets of Montana and Arkansas. And before my mind's eye there appeared in faltering parade all the "little" magazines of our great Republic; and I seemed to see, in a great cool morgue, on an endless array of stone slabs, all the privately printed children that are condemned to die so young; and the faint whispers of countless "little" theatres came to murmur confusedly in my ears. A club for the encouragement of young artists! Where could one turn to find a man who had not yielded to the encouragement that springs from within, needing no outer confirmation? Were there anywhere men who had sturdily resisted all encouragement of this most fatal sort?

From my high window I sought reassurance and found it, momentarily, in the figure of a man with a dangling ice-hook, and in the black and red of a grocery wagon that disgorged a laden youth of Dutch stolidity. Here was some comfort surely: neither of these men, in that instant at least, was writing a sonnet or smearing "with certain ochres and some oil a few more perishable ells of cloth." Putting aside a base suspicion as to how they might utilize their spare hours, I contentedly feasted my eyes upon them for a space. The sight of them made me mourn for all the splendid pork-butchers and iron-mongers who might have been, for all the boys and girls who might have led happy, useful lives and have bred sturdy children, had they not heard the call of art, and by some sad fault of hearing, thought the voice was speaking to themselves. How many hands now mournfully held the brush that were born to wield the skillet joyously. And, too, how many men who had not been born to patronize had lived to solicit! For though one may not quite agree with Beerbohm that "to force from little tubes of lead a glutinous flamboyance and to defile, with the hair of a camel therein steeped, taut canvas is hardly the diversion of a gentleman," still the truth is that once a gentleman has discovered this diversion as an occupation for himself he is thenceforward, in

almost every case, unwilling to play Mæcenæ. No matter what quantities of gold a man may possess, once he seeks to express his own soul, he must thereafter consider the soul-expressions of others as matters of only minor import deserving of no solid financial recognition. Exceptions there are, of course; but we may hold it true that the spreading growth of art is the dearth of patronage. A club for the encouragement of young artists!

## II

So my thoughts took form after I read that article. So I lamented the lives that had been ruined by the encouragement of "The Poet's Corner" in many a country newspaper, or by the adjectives of fond relatives crowded about the star member—for that night—of the family, after the last fall of the curtain on the local interpretation of "As You Like It." Men and women who should have spent their days in eating, drinking and sleeping, and in the accumulation of sufficient wealth for the purchase of pug dogs or town cars or, even, the creations of predestined workers in marble, paint and words; men and women who were formed never to suffer the slightest æsthetic twinge of appreciation or, even more surely, the least need for artistic expression of their own egos, were now tortured by the quest of *le mot juste*, tormented by their gropings for living form, and bewildered by their theories of significant line. Garrets and cellars were full of them. And I thought that they might have been spared if only their weak eyes had not ever caught a partial, never-to-be-forgotten glimpse of beauty.

But, on sober reflection, I have reached the conviction that there is no possible escape for anyone, in the United States as it is now constituted, from the dolours of art. American commercialism is a myth, we are in the throttling grip of æstheticism; our country swarms with hosts of vision-tortured Miltons, Raphaels and Michel-angelos. Suppose these men and women of whose fate I have just now spoken

sadly *had* turned to the making of boots or the selling of sewing-machines: where would they have found freedom from the pangs that every artist knows? Who among us, indeed, is not an artist now. Surely the man who bakes our pastry does not deny the name. Nor the man who teaches our children dancing. Nor the woman who swathes our wife in reasonable materials expensively arranged. Our magazines, our subways, Broadway in electric lights—all of them inform the world of artists who have dreamed dreams and given those dreams form. McFaddens' Corsets—"Comfort Made Beautiful by Art"—are symphonies in silk and bone; song publishers, littering the world from Tin Pan Alley, speak in a special tone of their "Art Ballads"; Artiform Shoes "make walking easy and the human foot a pleasure to the eye." We are all, the whole pack of us, in full cry upon the scent of Beauty. How many sleepless nights were spent to shape the streamlined hood of our most lovely touring-car! How many hours of sheer creative effort found final expression in The Washtub Beautiful! The utilitarianism of an elder day has been thrust aside: we are Artists.

For it is a lamentable truth that we cannot, as a nation, be trusted to take things in moderation, whether or not they be tainted by alcohol. Our cities are prodigalities in stone and steel. Our prairies are excessive. Our sea-coast is a littoral exaggeration. And we brag

lustily of our distance from the Aristotelean mean. We are proud that we have the highest buildings in the world, the most corrupt politicians to be found this side of Uranus, more telephones per family, more automobiles per person, more bathrooms per house than any other nation on our planet. Discovering cleanliness, we mortgaged our future to the plumbers. The telephone, so soon as it was introduced to us, doomed us forever after, wherever we might be, to unheralded intrusions. Into the woods of Maine and onto the plateaux of the Rockies we carried this infernal instrument. Unable to take anything in moderation, we sold our birthright of privacy for a mess of wrong numbers and a few right ones.

And now we have discovered Art. Ears and eyes have no respite from the result, for we have turned our backs on Horace and taken for our creed, not *Ars est celare artem*, but *Ars ostentare artem*. There is escape only for those whose purse is equal to the journey. For the older countries still take their art, like their wine, easily, naturally and unostentatiously. In some quiet village of Hampshire, let us imagine, the wearied soul may find repose; and there, sitting in contemplation of the stones of some old abbey that sinks quietly into the land around it, a man may still, perhaps, live out his days untroubled by any thought of *le mot juste*, living form, significant line, or the Washtub Beautiful.



SUCCESS with women lies not in keeping them contented, but in keeping them anxious.



ONLY the foolish little girl cries when she wants something. The wise little girl pouts.



# Cousin Edgar

*By Ford Douglas*

## I

JUDGE HAWPER stared at the telegram in dismay. His head was inclined forward—he was holding the yellow slip down between his knees for a better slant of light—and the pose might have suggested to one of a romantic turn of mind something gravely symbolical—Meditation, perhaps. Considering, however, that Judge Hawper was a fat man and was sitting on the edge of the bed in a drab flannel nightgown and carpet slippers, a better, if less fanciful, title would have been *Eskimo Fishing Through The Ice*. It was Sunday morning and he had the usual headache.

A darkey bellboy had slipped the message under the door, delighted, no doubt, to pound on the Judge's panel, for he grinned happily when oaths came from within.

"Ole Judge feelin' mighty savage dis mo'nin," he remarked. "Bootleggers certainly is goin' to ketch hell to-morrow."

In bitterness and with a thumping head Hawper contemplated the single line typed across the saffron-tinted blank. It was sent from Dallas, Texas, and, to use a legal phrase, was in words and figures as follows

BUSTER:—Arrive 2:30 Sunday kill fatted calf.—EDGAR.

Edgar Johnson! Hawper visioned him profanely and then crumpling the offending telegram into a ball he threw it on the floor. He reached slowly and laboriously under the bed for a sock and, after great effort, his search successful, he paused with it in his hand

to exclaim aloud. "Oh why, O God, have you inflicted this upon me?"

He felt a little better after this, and, rising to his feet, went to the dresser and poured himself out a drink of rye from a bottle that had once been the property of a bootlegging person now unhappily incarcerated in the Atlanta penitentiary.

Edgar Johnson was a second cousin. Every year or so he made a trip to the city, paving the way with a telegram to Hawper. The messages differed only as to date. They all instructed him to "kill the fatted calf," a delicate hint that Hawper should busy himself in the matter of entertainment. These visits were as so many nightmares to Hawper. He didn't sleep for weeks afterward.

The truth is that the Judge had outgrown his friendship for Johnson, a fact that the latter unfortunately failed to realize. As boys they had grown up together, had, in fact, been chums. And then at about the time that Hawper began the study of the law, Johnson emigrated to the boundless steppes of Texas, embarking in the cattle business.

Years passed, years of success for both men. Hawper became a member of the federal judiciary, the emperor of a court of great and elaborate ceremony, ritual and practice. Cousin Edgar, on the other hand, had flowered in the democratic atmosphere of Texas. He was a hand-shaker, a man of exceeding affability, and in vocal powers he could by no means be likened to a shrinking violet. He had a big voice and was not backward in using it. In proof of this it may be mentioned that at the State Fair he won the annual

hog-calling contest with the highest score ever made in that Texas classic. Had a Panhandle "Who's Who" been published it would have undoubtedly recorded the fact that in politics he was a Democrat; that in sport he had bulldogged a steer in nearly record time; that he was a Methodist, a Freemason, and a poker player of no mean ability; and that he was the owner of one of the largest ranches in Texas.

These achievements, however, failed to impress Judge Hawper. Of the art of hog-calling and the science of bulldogging he knew nothing; he differed with Johnson in politics and religion, being a Republican and an Episcopalian; and, moreover, Johnson grated on him in every way. He didn't like Johnson's boisterous manner, his familiarity, or his clothes, particularly his huge slouch hat. Another thing that maddened Hawper was that his cousin usually addressed him as "Buster," a boyhood nickname. On several occasions he had remonstrated at this, but all that it had availed him was a genial "cussing." The fellow could not seem to comprehend the dignity that went with the judicial office. He was from every viewpoint impossible, and now, as Hawper slowly drew on the sock, his loathing became audible.

"I'll leave town, damme if I don't!" he declared. "I can't stand Johnson. . . . The last time he was here I was sick for a month."

He paused in his labor to consider some fleeting and rather wild schemes of deliverance: (a) he had read in the newspapers that an assassination could be brought about for the small sum of twelve dollars and fifty cents; (b) he could have Johnson arrested on some trumped-up charge, possibly for having liquor in his possession; (c) he could meet Johnson at the train with a shotgun and then without further ado blow his brains out.

This last appealed to him as being simple in plan and certain as to results. It was a pleasing thing to contemplate, and for a time he sat on the edge of the bed, dramatizing it in all its details.

He stood with smoking gun watching Johnson's life blood slowly ooze across the pavement while Johnson's brains—"if any," he said aloud—added a decorative touch here and there to the adjacent walls. Immediately he felt better, spiritually uplifted to such a degree that he rose from his seat, and walking over to the dresser, took another drink from the bottle of the late bootlegger.

## II

IN the end Judge Hawper met the train as he knew he would. The ties of years and of blood cannot easily be wiped out, and so a few minutes before 2:30 he rolled up to the station in a hired machine and, after some words of instruction to the driver, entered the train-shed. He was facing an ordeal and his countenance showed it, being stern and grim, though rather red, the coloring being, if the truth must be told, the result of the last few jiggers of a forgotten pint of confiscated gin that he had found in a dresser drawer.

Concocted largely of alcohol, turpentine and furniture polish by a Polish bootlegger who at the moment languished in Leavenworth, the gin heightened Hawper's powers of imagination. A suddenly conceived idea of accomplishing his disagreeable errand incognito caused him to hold a handkerchief to his face, hoping by this ruse to be taken for one suffering from a hemorrhage of the nostrils, or, perhaps, a tubercular wayfarer. Acting both these rôles, his manner became at once furtive and suspicious, attracting general attention and some rather unfavorable criticism.

"Look who's here, men," shouted a tipsy soldier to his comrades. "It's one of them veiled prophets!"

"No it ain't," yelled another. "It's Fatima, the dancing girl." And he began an imitation of a certain weird melody inseparably associated with the Chicago Midway.

They gathered about him, wriggling their various interpretations of the

"hootchie kootchie." It was, of course, only a matter of time before all this would have led to murder; fortunately Providence in the form of a passenger agent intervened.

"Well, if it isn't Judge Hawper!" he beamed, at the same time flicking off some imaginary dust of travel from Hawper's shoulder. "I see you have hayfever. Our lake country is a splendid place for that. In fact, the national association meets there every year—no pollen, no sneezing, no running of the eyes—wait, I'll get you our folder on it."

Hawper's strange behavior thus plausibly explained, the soldiers went their way, not without, however, a few catcalls.

The passenger agent returned almost instantly. From some place he had grabbed a gaudily printed folder and now he came bounding forward with it extended at arm's length.

"Look, Judge, see what it says: 'Why Snuffle? Go to Grass Lake. Happy Hayfeverites have—'"

"To hell with it!" shouted Hawper in sudden fury. "There's nothing the matter with me except I want to be left alone."

"They all deny it, Judge. They're something like consumptives that way. But I know the signs. I can spot a man with hayfever a mile off. I've shipped too many of 'em."

Hawper's jugulars swelled out over his number 20 collar like a pair of toy balloons, his face livid. The retort on his lips promised to be scorching, but it was never uttered, for at that moment Cousin Edgar came through the gate.

At the sight of Hawper, Johnson let out a Comanche yell. "Hi there, Buster," he shouted. "How's the old scout?"

In extreme peril of breaking his jawbone, Hawper managed to set his countenance into something resembling a smile, at the same time extending his hand.

"I am very well, thank you," he said. "How—er—how long will your visit last?"

His cousin gazed at him admiringly.

"Well, damn your old hide, Buster, if you ain't lookin' about the same!" he exclaimed, ignoring Hawper's query. "Yes, you're the same old party—a little grayer and considerably broader through the paunch—takin' on too much tallow—but otherwise you're the same old rooster."

So saying, he gave his relative an affectionate slap on the back, which brough on a fit of coughing almost apoplectic and Hawper, in his paroxysm, was unable for the moment to make reply or protest.

"This here gent," said Johnson, turning to the crowd in a jovial explanation, "is my cousin, Judge Hawper—Elias P. Hawper. I've knowed him since he was knee high to a grasshopper. As a kid he was a puny little runt, but look at him now—a short-horn bull if there ever was one!"

Still coughing, Hawper waved a feeble hand, possibly in denial.

"Modesty's his weak point, gentlemen, always was," continued the Texan, pleased to have an audience. "At school he always let us other boys steal the apples; but he was strong on the divide, afterwards. Diplomacy, I call it. And that's what got him where he is today—a judge in one of the most important courts in this country. Remember him, boys," he added as an afterthought, "when he comes up for election again."

With a supreme effort Hawper straightened up and, grasping his guest by the arm, shoved him away from the crowd.

"Don't embarrass me, you fool," he sputtered. "Don't you know I'm appointed for life?"

"Hell, no," returned Johnson, genuinely surprised. "Well, that's pretty soft, ain't it! Appointed for life! What a puddin'!"

These various incidents, happening in such rapid-fire sequence, gave Hawper little time to take stock of his cousin's appearance. One glance now was enough. For Johnson, as on former visits, wore his western sheriff make-up. Which is to say that his coat was of the type known as a Prince

Albert, short skirted and flaring; the vest was cut very low, exposing a diamond pin of banjo shape secured by a tiny gold chain; and above this was the usual black string tie with one end negligently flopping. There was also the matter of boots. Very fine boots they were, vastly embroidered about the tops; and to give beholders both effects, one trouser leg was stuffed in while the other was pulled down over, fitting rather snugly about the ankle. Put, now, a big man with a handle-bar mustache in these garments and surmount the whole with one of the largest hats ever made by the late Mr. Stetson, and then you will have a very fair picture of Mr. Edgar Johnson as he stood near the station door.

"Come on," said Hawper. "Let's get out of here!"

"All right," agreed Johnson cheerfully, "but," and he stopped suddenly and began to look around, "where's Jim?"

"Jim who?" demanded Hawper. "Have you got anybody with you?"

For answer Johnson megaphoned his hands.

"Oh, Jim!" he bellowed, and the voice that had won the hog-calling contest reverberated down the marble corridor and even out into the train sheds. It was a matter of almost a minute before the echoes died and then there was an answering call.

"That's him," said Johnson, relieved. "He's around here somewheres."

Even as he spoke a youth emerged from the newsstand at the far end of the waiting room and hurried toward them. He was perhaps twenty, a big overgrown boy. In one hand he carried a small satchel made of varnished muslin stamped in a mosaic design that faintly resembled the hide of an alligator, an extinct species of alligator no doubt, with a skin of such exceeding thinness that it was almost transparent. His other hand and arm clamped a number of purchases, to wit: a sack of popcorn, a bag of bananas, a treatise on hypnotism, another by the same author covering the art of ven-

triloquism, and a penknife with a minute hole in one end through which, if held to the light, one might see a microscopic photograph of a nude woman.

As he drew near Judge Hawper staggered slightly in his tracks.

"Great God, Edgar, this fellow is not with you, is he?" he demanded huskily.

"Sure he is," responded Johnson, chuckling. "He's more fun than a box of monkeys. You'll laugh yourself sick over him."

"But those clothes!" ejaculated Hawper. "Where the devil did he get them?"

"Chicago. He says they are the very latest."

In anticipation of his trip, Jim—it developed later that his last name was Bradley—had given sartorial matters a great deal of thought. In this, it was apparent, he had not in any degree been influenced by the attire of his employer—indeed, there was a vast contrast. While the eastern born Mr. Johnson garbed himself in the melodramatic vestments of a two-gun sheriff, the native Texan had sought to give the impression of Bar Harbor with, perhaps, just a touch of Wall Street. And so after some weeks of thumbing the pages of a mail-order catalogue he had purchased, at a cost of \$8.65, f.o.b., Chicago, a suit he believed fitting the occasion. This was, to be explicit, "College Model No. 78523X, of formal design for those moving in the more fastidious circles of society."

An attempt to describe Model No. 78523X as it came into the focus of Judge Hawper's startled eyes is disheartening. Mere words fail. For that matter there are many things that baffle the powers of description, though often tried. The Grand Canyon of the Colorado, for example, has appeared in acres of type; the cathedral at Cologne, the Taj Mahal by moonlight, St. Peter's, the return of the Prodigal Son as pictured by Dr. Sunday, the battle of Gettysburg, the discovery of the River of Doubt, and the ascent of the immortal Little Eva into the clouds—all

these phenomena and events have been the inspiration of countless writers, yet in no single instance has any of them achieved a word picture worthy of mention.

Briefly, it may be said that the three garments constituting Mr. Bradley's purchase were as many triumphs in art and manufacturing methods. They were the work of a Balkan designer engaged by the American house of Goldstein, Robinsky & Wolf. Huge presses had stamped the garments out; the buttonholes, by a new process, were printed; the buttons themselves were shot on by some sort of a gun; the yards of tape were affixed by a glue guaranteed to be waterproof. The color, an eye-smashing azure tint, was known in the dye trade as "Incredible Blue."

The general effect of the whole, when draped on the person of Mr. Bradley, was decidedly cubistic. There were no parallel lines. Everything slanted one way or another, even the pockets. The vertical and the horizontal were absent; angles of all degrees predominated and the general scheme of architecture seemed to be that of the lean-to school. The trousers were of the style known as "peg top," wide at the hips and narrowing to spike-like extremities at the ankles; the waistcoat was largely constructed of tape and pockets; and the coat, with rows of pearl buttons on the cuffs, might be said to close the show.

"You are not planning," said Hawper, steeling himself, "to have your friend go along with us?"

"Sure I am! I promised Jim a time. He's the best cowhand I got."

Hawper chanced another glance at Bradley, who at the moment stood with head thrown back staring tensely through the minute hole in his newly purchased penknife, and was horrified by a new discovery. This time it was Mr. Bradley's shoes. They charmed Hawper's eye as a rattler charms a jay, and in a sudden feeling of numbness he reached out and clutched a bench for support.

"O God!" he cried, pointing at Bradley's feet. "Look!"

They were, indeed, remarkable shoes, being of the button variety, bulbously humped at the toe and of a mesmeric shade of chrome yellow.

"He ain't got no call to wear 'em," said Johnson, not comprehending Hawper's anguish. "A rider ought to wear boots. And look at that hat, will you?" he went on a little impatiently and at the same time gesturing at the small, narrow brimmed fedora, made gay with a multi-colored band. "That's a hell of a hat to wear, especially as he's got a good six pound sombrero at home. But he would get it for this trip."

With a sigh Mr. Bradley reluctantly removed his eye from the hole in the knife handle, giving for the moment his attention to the bananas of which he bolted three in as many seconds.

"Come here, Jim," called his employer. "I want you to meet my cousin, Judge Hawper."

"Howdy!" greeted Bradley, grasping Hawper's hand in his huge paw. "Johnson's been a tellin' me about you—say," he interrupted himself, at the same time handing the astonished Hawper the penknife, "take a look at her. She ain't got a stitch on."

"Come!" snapped Hawper. "Let's get out of here!"

### III

HE led the way out of the building and down to the end of the square where the machine was waiting, stopping several times to rescue the pair from the clutches of confidence men, newsboys and taxi-drivers, and there he hurriedly loaded them into the car.

The driver evidently had his instructions, for he soon nosed the car out of the dense traffic and headed for the less congested districts beyond the stockyards. This was a part of Hawper's plan. He hoped to engage them in a sightseeing trip until the shades of night had fallen, and then to dump them without further ceremony at their hotel. Cautious inquiry now as to the

probable length of their stay developed that their mission was the purchase of a bull for the Circle Bar W ranch, a discriminating task that might engage them for days. Sullenly Hawper multiplied twelve dollars and a half by two and resolved to get in touch with a competent gunman the first thing in the morning.

As they rode Mr. Bradley, seated with the driver, leaned far out of the car, imparting his impressions volubly. From them Judge Hawper learned that the city compared but ill with Dallas or Fort Worth and that Amarillo was a livelier place by far. Soon, however, he lapsed into silence, for now, entering into the mild sport of counting Ford cars, his utmost powers of concentration were needed.

They traversed miles and miles of back streets, and after something over an hour Johnson suddenly demanded: "Eli, where in hell are we goin'?"

"Just riding about—showing you the city," replied Hawper.

"Well, she certainly is a cemetery as far as I can see," complained the ranchman. "Let's turn around and go back downtown where there's some life. I'm a Texas long-horn and I'm on the rampage—"

"It's Sunday," interrupted Hawper crossly, "and everything is closed. Be sensible and let me show you our charming residential section."

"But I don't want to see it," argued Johnson. "I didn't come all the way up here from Texas to look at these back alleys and vacant lots. I come up to buy a bull and raise hell. And I'm goin' to do both before I go back."

Hawper bit his lip, restraining a hot flare of temper.

"On your left," he said, in a desperate attempt to interest his guest, "you will observe the residence of Mr. John J. Jimpson, one of our merchant princes who—"

"Five thousand Fords," excitedly interrupted Bradley. "Gosh!"

"Would you mind asking Mr. Bradley to kindly refrain from leaning so far out of the car? I fear we are at-

tracting a good deal of attention," said Hawper, lowering his voice. "His clothes are of such a vivid tint that—"

"They are kinda blue," agreed Johnson, grinning. "They got him into four fights coming up through Arkansaw on the train. You see they took him for a Federal soldier."

They rode in silence for a time and the visitors had the opportunity of inspecting a quarry, a rock-crusher, and some miles of streets in a new suburban addition on which there were no houses.

Again Mr. Johnson rebelled.

"Eli," he began, "this here riding aroun' ain't no treat to me. And it ain't no treat to Jim, neither, cause he rides twenty mile of wire fence every day back home." He waved a hand contemptuously at the vast plain of suburban lots. "We might as well be back in the Panhandle. It ain't no different—except down there a feller can get a drink if he wants it. And speakin' of drinks, what do you say to gettin' a small quart vial of red licker?"

"Edgar!" Judge Hawper's voice indicated amazement at the very suggestion. "Don't you know that I am sworn to uphold the law? I regret that you even mentioned such a thing."

"Do you?" retorted Johnson coolly. "Well, I don't. What I'm a honin' for right now is about four fingers of bourbon, and if money will buy it"—he pulled out a huge bale of currency from his pocket—"then I'm goin' to have it. Turn around driver," he ordered, "and hit the back trail. Get us down to one of them big hotels as quick as you can."

Hawper turned pale. To appear in a public place with Johnson and Bradley, or either of them, was the very thing he had hoped to avoid.

"You've signing your own death warrant," he declared. "The liquor to be had at hotels is nothing but pure wood alcohol. Deadly, sir, deadly!"

Mr. Johnson then played his last card, a thing he had been leading up to from the outset.

"Well, how 'bout that there club you belong to. As I remember it, there

was a plenty and some to spare."

The guest's memory was no better than his host's. For Hawper too could remember when there was a plenty and some to spare. More than that he could also remember the one unfortunate occasion when he had taken Johnson there. Never could he forget the picture of Johnson loudly ordering drinks for all hands, including servants, and endeavoring to pay for them with handfuls of large, clanking silver dollars!

"Absurd," said Hawper. "The club is as dry as a bone. The rules are very strict, very. A violation would result in instant expulsion."

"Well then, we'll have to take a chance on the hotel stuff," said Johnson sourly. "We can try a sample on Jim first, and if he lives through it I reckon we can."

Desperate now, snatching at straws like a drowning man, Hawper voiced objections, argued, pleaded, but to all these his guest only shook his head doggedly. He had come for a time and he was going to have it, regardless.

There seemed to be no hope,—and then, just as he was about to surrender, Hawper happened to think of O'Dowd's.

#### IV

FOR sound business reasons the old robber barons built their castles along the trade routes. So did O'Dowd. One of the main arteries of the city was at his door, a street that was a continuation of a great highway of the hinterland. Crowded with the traffic of truck gardeners and farmers from the outlying districts, jammed with trucks and teams from the neighboring warehouse district, wedged even tighter by street cars and automobiles, it was at all hours a bedlam where motormen, teamsters and chauffeurs cursed each other with the greatest of abandon and, presumably, pleasure.

Anyone could tell you where O'Dowd's Place was. It was famous, boasted of the longest bar in the city. In that period spoken of now as "the

good old days," one might have either a fight or a frolic, and either with the greatest ease and surety at O'Dowd's. Reservations were not required, there was no plush rope, and both forms of entertainment, so to speak, were on the bill, hot and ready to serve. It was quieter now after the Reformation, and there was scarcely a case of mayhem a week.

The saloon itself was little changed. The long bar was still there; the molting mirrors seemed to be as flyspecked as ever; the sawdust on the floor smelled of resin in the same old way. But there was a change. On entering one sensed at once an atmosphere of gloom. The crowd was gone. The huge icebox contained only near-beer, the back bar was pyramided with pop bottles, the free lunch counter was bare, and the large, hand-painted portrait of Bismarck, the gift of a local brewery, was supplanted by a cadaverous likeness of Woodrow Wilson.

But forlorn and corpse-like as the barroom appeared, O'Dowd's business was far from dead. He conducted a quiet trade from a back room, and although the volume was small the profits were enormous. A shrewd man was O'Dowd, cunning, a ward leader and the despot of all that territory between the gas tanks and the railroad yards. He was a big man, black Irish, broad-shouldered and with arms that dangled to his knees. His hands were enormous and hairy. He had a Neanderthal cast of countenance with a flat-topped skull that leveled off into bushy eyebrows.

Divested of his clothes and placed in a cage, Mr. O'Dowd might easily have passed for a chimpanzee. His speech was thick and deep, resembling the guttural cries of the higher simiæ. Usually he only grunted. And he was immensely strong. In the old days he delighted in throwing a switchman or a structural iron worker through the windows of his saloon. On these occasions he did not trouble himself to open the windows first. The crash of shattered glass was music to his ears. He had cannibalistic traits too, biting off a

finger occasionally. Once he spent a month in jail and paid five thousand dollars for the sweet morsel of an enemy's nose. And with all this he was a friend of Judge Hawper.

There is nothing remarkable about it. Hawper had not been born a Federal judge. There was a time when he was a struggling young lawyer, eager for a client and willing to spout at ward meetings in the hope of getting one. And he did. He got O'Dowd. It was a stroke of luck, something heaven-sent, for the pickings had been mighty thin. It was in fact a prize for which any lawyer might have striven. For next to the public service corporations and, perhaps, some of the larger casualty companies, O'Dowd's legal business was easily the largest in the city. With O'Dowd as a client, young Hawper prospered. He ate regularly and abandoned celluloid collars and cuffs for those of real linen. He moved into better quarters, joined several secret orders, became a public speaker, and began the long, slow drudgery that ended in his elevation to the bench.

It was only natural, then, that the badgered Hawper should suddenly conceive the idea of removing his guests from public view by the simple expedient of hiding them away for a few hours in O'Dowd's back room.

"I have a friend, Edgar," he said with a slight cough, "whom I think might possibly relieve the situation."

"It's taken you a mighty long time to recollect him," commented Mr. Johnson sarcastically. "Suppose we look him up before he dies of old age."

"I will telephone and see if it can be done," said Hawper, reddening. "His place was once a public dramshop—I hope you have no objections?"

"Hell, no!" roared the guest. "The more drams the better. Let's hurry."

Urged to all possible speed, the chauffeur soon found a drugstore and Hawper got out of the car.

"It will only take me a minute," he promised. "Be patient."

Confident as to the success of his mission, Judge Hawper was as yet un-

aware of the popularity of a drugstore telephone. He found it in use. A pimply faced and gum-chewing youth was at the instrument, engaged, one might easily guess, in a conversation with his sweetheart, and this he shamelessly continued, unabashed at the presence of a stranger. He had been at it for an hour and his mental powers, slight as they were at the beginning, were failing fast, reducing him to but two phrases, to wit: "I'll say so" and "I'll tell the world I do." Hawper fidgeted impatiently. At last, however, the youth, having told the world for the hundredth time, in a state of extreme weakness, swallowed his gum and, this accident sundering his last remaining thread of intelligence, he surrendered the 'phone.

Hawper snatched the receiver off the hook and gave a number. Unfortunately the instrument was one of the pay-first kind and now as he searched his pockets he found that he had every other coin save the required five cent piece. He bargained with the druggist for change, and although this required but a moment he returned to the telephone to discover that it was again in use, this time by a bobbed-haired miss of probably eighteen and possibly twenty-eight.

Hawper paced the floor, muttering. He approached close, his fingers spread out as though to grab the instrument the moment she should relinquish it—actions that hurried or embarrassed her not in the least. Her conversation might have been a carbon copy of that of the youth who preceded her. She also told the world. Made desperate now by the delay, Hawper resorted to the ruse of stepping on her foot, whereat she promptly kicked him on the shin and placidly continued her description of a hat.

Twenty maddening minutes passed. Outside, the chauffeur was giving barnyard imitations on his auto horn to the vast admiration of a group of small boys. Hawper stood it a few moments longer and then, giving way to the shrieking horn, he uttered a low and

profane cry and sprang through the door.

"What the devil are you trying to do?" he thundered at the driver.

Mr. Johnson opened the tonneau door.

"Get in, Buster," he said. "I thought we'd fetch you after awhile."

Wrathfully Hawper climbed in.

"Yes, sir," continued Johnson, "that boy's an artist. He can do more tricks with a horn than old Gabriel himself."

Thus encouraged, the chauffeur executed a final shrieking fanflare that made Hawper attempt to get out of the car.

Johnson hauled him back in.

"Same old Eli," he chuckled. "All pomp and dignity! Roman Emperor! Forget it, old boy, because today's a holiday."

"It's Sunday," retorted Hawper hotly, "and certainly no time for us to be making jackasses of ourselves."

He gave the chauffeur an address, explaining that he had been unable to get O'Dowd over the telephone and that they would have to trust to luck.

## V

It had been a long, dull afternoon with O'Dowd. Sunday was usually a dull day. A few friends dropped in after late mass but their trade was not profitable, half pints mostly. Some bought nothing at all. Of these there was old man Goslin with his scheme of blowing up Windsor Castle with a barrel of nitroglycerine. For over a year Goslin had been able to cash the idea every Sunday afternoon for drinks, but of late O'Dowd seemed to be getting cold. And then there was Emmett McQueeney, hot always for Erin's freedom, mouthy, and with a gift of getting into an argument when it came his turn to buy. Another dead loss was Cock-eyed Sullivan who never had anything to say, but who, by reason of his oblique vision, was able to see a drink from any angle. O'Dowd, however, never allowed himself to become bored; when he tired of them he threw them out.

About four o'clock the buzzer con-

cealed under O'Dowd's desk emitted two short grunts.

"If uts pro'bition off'cers, smash um," he called to his bartender outside.

Three men had alighted from a car and were entering the door. The one who led the way was a pompous looking fat man; next there was a person who might be either the proprietor of a Wild West show or patent medicine faker; the third man was the queerest looking of all—an overgrown boy in a vivid blue suit.

The bartender, Jerry, stuck his head in the back room door.

"They're funny lookin' guys. I can't make 'em out," he said. "You better hide it."

O'Dowd snatched the bottle from the table and going over to the corner of the room dropped it through a hole in the floor. This done, he picked up a short length of billiard cue that lay handy on his desk and walked out into the saloon.

Whatever his intention he stopped short at sight of the first of the strangers.

"Judge Ha-a-p-pur!" he exclaimed in glad surprise. "Man, I'm glad to see ya. Come back into me office."

The ceremonies of introduction followed, and although O'Dowd's countenance evidenced his disapproval of Mr. Johnson's given name and of Mr. Bradley's attire his welcome was none the less cordial.

"The place is yours," he said with a wave of his hairy paw.

"My friends," said Hawper, a trifle embarrassed, "would be most grateful for a small libation if it could be procured."

"Sure," said O'Dowd. "Anything you want—whusky, gin or rum."

"A little whisky," said Johnson eagerly. "Bourbon if you have it."

"Sure we have it." And then sticking his head out of the office door O'Dowd called to his bartender, "Jerry, bring the spittoons."

Interesting disclosures followed. Two large brass cuspidors that stood before the bar were brought in and placed on

the table, and then to the amazement of the visitors the tops were unscrewed, revealing false bottoms in which full gallons of liquor were stored. Nor was this all. The big oil lamp that hung from the ceiling was full of rum, O'Dowd told them; and if gin was desired he had only to tap the stove pipe. He had case goods to be sure, but made wise by a number of raids he did not keep the bottled stuff on the premises.

Drinks were now poured for all, including Mr. Cockeyed Sullivan, who had by some occult power sensed the festivities from afar.

"Here's how," said Johnson, tossing off a small tumblerful neat. He laid the glass down, moving his lips in the critical manner of a professional sampler.

"That," he said, "is what I call good whiskey. Of which there is, broadly speaking, two kinds—singing and fighting. And this lick, gentlemen, is undoubtedly singing lick."

So saying, and as though to prove his assertion, Mr. Johnson leaned back in his chair and gave voice to a ballad of the wind-swept plains of the Panhandle.

Oh, give me a home  
Where the buffalos roam  
And the deer and the antelope play  
With never a care,  
'Neath skies bright and fair,  
I'll be happy all day.

Mr. O'Dowd applauded loudly.

"Foine! foine!" he said. "A great voice."

Thus encouraged, Mr. Johnson sang another stanza, and then another and another, refreshing himself between efforts from the shining brass receptacle at his elbow.

Harried and badgered all afternoon as he had been, a warm glow of geniality now stole over the person of Judge Hawper. With the second hooker from the trick cuspidor his jangled nerves relaxed and he felt the soothed comfort of a purring tomcat before a grate fire.

Mr. O'Dowd called in Jerry, famed

as "the singing bartender," and who at command rendered "Mother Macree."

It was a tremendous success, tears running off Mr. Bradley's cheeks as water runs off a roof; and, noting this touching tribute to his art, Jerry was easily persuaded to give the "A Bird In A Gilded Cage."

Mr. Bradley now attempted "The Cowboy's Lament," but being under a great emotional stress his voice cracked and, at the suggestion of Mr. Johnson, he postponed his effort until he had mastered himself.

It was indeed friendly whiskey, singing whiskey. The warmest feeling of goodfellowship prevailed, and even when old man Mahoney, who lived in a neighboring shack with three goats—and smelled it—entered the room and helped himself to a drink, there was no unfriendly comment, whereat Mahoney helped himself to another.

Judge Hawper spoke at length on the Volstead Act, denouncing it roundly—a speech that would have interested the six hundred odd bootleggers incarcerated in jails at that moment by reason of his pronouncements. He used the same accurate English, the same well-rounded sentences, that he did on the bench and, warming to his theme, he prophesied that the time would come when every family would own a still and that the manufacture of spirituous beverages would be subsidized by act of Congress. About that time the cuspidors became exhausted.

There was gin, however, and the stovepipe was tapped with magical results. This mixed with an equal part of soda pop made a drink both sweet and seductive. There was no sting to it, no burn, and if it had a kick it was linked with a time fuse. They drank a vast quantity of it.

But alas! it had none of the soothing quality of the liquor that preceded it. The singing component was absent. The first evidence of this was when Mr. Mahoney proposed an attack on the office of the British consul. He could steal, he said, an armful of dynamite from a neighboring quarry and with

this they could deliver a blow for the Irish Republic.

But a sweeter revenge lay near the heart of Mr. O'Dowd. Across the natural frontier of the railroad tracks was the empire of a rival despot, Dennis McShane. He was a waxen little man and O'Dowd would have long since torn him limb from limb had it not been for the mamelukes who guarded him. These last were of a different race, dark, swarthy and possessed of a singular skill and accuracy with their native weapon, the sawed-off shotgun.

For years O'Dowd had schemed at McShane's undoing; and for a like period McShane had plotted for the downfall of O'Dowd. They were as the Hatfields and the McCoys. Rarely did they venture outside their own domains. McShane risked no chance of capture by the O'Dowd wild Irish, but his fear of them was no greater than that of O'Dowd for Italian buckshot.

A stein of gin on top of the singing whiskey was all that was needed now to bring matters to a focus, and, his face beginning to flush in a slow rage, O'Dowd unbosomed himself. Many were the insults he had suffered, he said. Mere flesh could stand no more. He was going to do something—something he had planned for weeks.

Briefly, it was to be a sortie that very night on enemy territory. Spies had reported that McShane usually spent Sunday evening with his brother-in-law, frequently returning to his home unattended. O'Dowd determined to intercept him—and that would be the last of McShane.

Judge Hawper was at once horrified. Hotly he argued against it, declaring it sheer murder and without a possible defense at law. To this Mr. O'Dowd replied that he wanted no better defense than an alibi in which all present would, of course, join.

"'Tis a cinch," he said. "I have me disguise all ready."

He reached down into a desk drawer and pulled out a black slouch hat to which was affixed a false beard. "Look!" he said, slipping the thing on.

The transformation was amazing, terrorizing. Blackbeard the pirate stood before them, needing only a red sash stuck full of knives and pistols to make the picture complete.

"God!" ejaculated Mr. Bradley, staring. "He looks like old man Simpson what was hung last year up on Big Buzzard crick. He was a hawg thief."

The comparison, while not flattering, might have passed without resentment by Mr. O'Dowd had it not been for an unfortunate incident in the life of one of his ancestors. In short, Mr. O'Dowd's grandfather had suffered the same fate as the late Simpson and for the same offense. Though this had happened back in Ireland many years ago, to O'Dowd the outrage was as of yesterday, and now, the stovepipe gin playing queer tricks with his brain, he sat down to consider the affront.

"Wha's that?" he demanded of Bradley, "What'd ya say about me grandfather?"

"I ain't said nuthin' 'bout your grandfather—yet," replied Bradley, grinning.

He intended this for a mere bit of pleasantry, but the more O'Dowd thrashed it over the more he became convinced that it veiled an insult. All thought of his intended foray into the McShane stronghold vanished, and, tearing off his disguise, he threw it on the table.

Innocent as to all this, Mr. Johnson burst again into song, interrupting for the moment Judge Hawper's exposé of the League of Nations.

"Edgar, I must ask you to desist," he said. "Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Mahoney have expressed themselves as greatly interested in my views and—"

"Oh, give me a home  
Where the buffalos roam,"  
roared Johnson.

Other of O'Dowd's henchmen dropped in from time to time and soon the room was crowded. Their leader, however, made no attempt at greeting, not even so much as favoring them with a glance as he sat darkly brooding. He revolved over in his mind a number of

schemes for Bradley's extermination. Necessarily it must be accomplished in a manner that would bring no rebuke from Judge Hawper, and that complicated things.

Staring moodily down at the floor, O'Dowd's eye fell on the peg tops of Mr. Bradley's trousers, the sight of which for some reason angering him the more. And then an astonishing thing happened. By some strange mental process his wrath gradually detached itself from Mr. Bradley's person and, by an even stranger cerebation, fastened on Mr. Bradley's pants. The vivid shade of blue inflamed him as a red flag inflames a bull.

On the desk was a bottle of ink; toying with this O'Dowd managed to palm it unobserved. A moment later he had removed the cork and now he entered into a sprightly bantering with Bradley, jovially slapping him at times on the legs. He was full of merry quips and jokes, each of which brought a succession of light taps on Mr. Bradley's limbs. A sudden and unexpected opening of the door brought the dénouement, for as the light streamed in Mr. Bradley caught one horrified glance at his trousers and at the same instant the cork of the ink bottle fell awkwardly out of O'Dowd's hand.

For a moment there was silence as all stared at Bradley's legs. He had the limbs of a leopard. Round, black, inch-wide disks spotted him from waist to ankle, a clownish effect that made Mr. O'Dowd break out in a scream of laughter.

But there was nothing humorous in it for Bradley. His prized suit was ruined. Though he was slow to anger, his face began to redden and he turned to O'Dowd.

"What the Sam Hill you been doin'?" he demanded. "You've just about ruined my britches, that's what you've done!"

Mr. O'Dowd's mirth appeared to be uncontrollable.

"Oh, take him away!" he shrieked. "'Tis the black smallpox he has!"

And then as though to heighten the

illusion he picked up the cork and added a large spot in the center of Mr. Bradley's vest.

Mr. Bradley then acted. In a sudden flash of fury he knocked O'Dowd into a far corner of the room, and, then, as he sprang after him, his bulbous yellow shoes flashed back and forth as they sank into the O'Dowd ribs. Then things began to happen.

With wild yells the Irish charged. Outside in the saloon O'Dowd's henchmen, a sort of Swiss Guard, rushed for the rack of billiard cues, handy weapons in a free-for-all.

From sheer force of numbers Bradley was almost smothered in the attack. Old man Mahoney, surprisingly agile for a man of his years, wound his arms around the Texan's neck, the odor of the Mahoney goats almost gassing him. Yet, he fought them as Davy Crockett fought the Mexicans in the Alamo. He was a big man and powerful. There was a splintering of ribs as his fist thudded into the pack and the pair of chrome yellow shoes worked with the deadly precision of turret guns.

O'Dowd, now having regained his feet, snatched his three-foot length of billiard cue from behind the desk and, watching his chance, approached the struggling Bradley from the rear. The Texan was in imminent peril. O'Dowd raised his club,—but the blow was never delivered.

It was Cousin Edgar who came to the rescue. The spell of the singing whiskey had lingered with Mr. Johnson. In the best of humor he had been clearing his throat preparatory to another vocal number, and then the fight started before he knew what it was all about. Mr. Johnson lacked neither courage nor brawn. The Texas Panhandle from whence he hailed is not effete, and, moreover, being a bulldogger of steers he had a liking for rude sports. So he entered the fray with both zest and gusto.

He fought with his fists for a few moments, doing very creditable work, and then seeing Bradley's danger he reached for his weapon. From under

the flaring skirts of the Prince Albert there leaped a Frontier Model Colt's .45. It was a foot in length and weighed approximately six pounds. There was an odd sound as the barrel of the heavy weapon smote the Neanderthal skull of Mr. O'Dowd, the blow, incidentally, ending Mr. O'Dowd's activities for the evening.

They fought their way through the door and out into the saloon, meeting here the charge of the Swiss Guard. There was a bedlam of oaths and yells, then three deafening explosions and the lights went out.

Through all this Judge Hawper sat as one in a trance. His brain refused to function and he stared at the struggling men, hopelessly befuddled. It was like a dream, a nightmare in which one is thrust into some terrorizing situation without the powers of locomotion. Hawper made an attempt to rise from his seat but for the moment his legs were unequal to the task, and, sinking back again, he covered his eyes to shut out the dreadful sight.

The pistol shots roused him. There were a few more yells and then, the shouting dying away, a strange silence fell upon the place. As a matter of fact the fighters had fled, but this Hawper did not know. He was thinking now only of his own safety. There had been a fight, shots, perhaps murder, and the police who were sure to come would find Judge Elias P. Hawper. He would be arrested on Sunday afternoon in a common doggery! The scandal of it all terrorized him and he glanced wildly around for some means of deliverance.

At his elbow a window opened out into an adjacent alley and through this he could, if fortune favored, escape. There was no time to lose. He staggered up out of his chair and a moment later had raised the sash. Then it occurred to him that he might be seen, and, looking desperately about for a coat or even a hat that might offer some chance of disguise, his eyes fell on a thing heaven-sent. It was nothing else than the slouch hat with attached false

whiskers that O'Dowd had bought for his intended foray against McShane.

Hastily pulling this on over his round face, he put his legs over the window sill and dropped the four feet, landing in the alley with a grunt. Then, scrambling to his feet, he ran as he had not run in forty years.

## VI

THE Bijou Picture Palace was letting out the crowd from the last afternoon performance. Women and children for the most part—little girls stiff in their Sunday clothes, small boys in knickerbockers, flappers, and a few aged women—and streaming slowly out of the theater they stood undecidedly on the sidewalk. The street lamps had just been turned on, the popcorn wagon was doing a quiet business, early church bells had begun to ring—and then into the peaceful gathering burst a terrorizing specter. Disheveled, covered with dust and dirt, a man with fierce piratical whiskers bolted out of the dark alley and charged through the crowd. Children were knocked headlong, several of the aged women fainted, infants screamed, and the flappers experienced the delicious thrills they had sought and had not found in the theatre. The apparition vanished as suddenly as it appeared and the patrol wagon that roared into the scene with shrieking sirens returned to the station without a prisoner, though the bluecoats searched the neighborhood.

It was midnight when Judge Hawper crawled from a coal shed and slipped around to a side door of his hotel. Cautiously he let himself in and then, climbing six flights of back stairs, entered his room unseen.

On the floor he found a note that had been shoved under the door and, picking it up, he recognized the scrawl of Cousin Edgar:

BUSTER:

Jim and I have had a hell of a good time, but have decided to buy our bull in Chicago. Will look you up on our way back. Then you can kill a fatted calf.

Hastily yours,  
EDGAR.

# Stuffed Peacocks

*By Emily Clark*

**A** CQUISITIVE as she was, she valued nothing for the pleasure of having it, but in order that other people might know she had it, and admire her. Her contemporary, the lady in velvet, was inclined to believe that secret possessions were safer, and more apt to be permanently possessed, but Mrs. Sulgrave would have been frankly bored with a belonging, however precious and permanent, that had to be guarded behind closed doors. The joy of knowing that she was admired was insipid compared with the joy of having her friends know it. She was almost universally attractive to men—the few that she did not attract considered her a fool—and the blaze of publicity to which they were subjected did not, apparently, terrify them too greatly. She was amiable to women, too, and in the length of a long life was seldom heard to make a spiteful remark to or about them. Popularity was as essential to her as oxygen, and she never jeopardized it in any quarter, however unimportant.

After what was, for that time, a long, triumphant career, she married a man whose unselfishness, amounting to weakness, was his most distinguished quality, and who never quite recovered from the surprise and honor of marrying her. She referred to him usually as "poor Lucien," and her affection for him was far less than for their daughter. Mrs. Sulgrave lived for men and was utterly dependent on them, not only for actual food and shelter, but for what was spiritually as necessary to her as either. But she did not like them, and her contempt for them was only thinly veiled by the sentimentality

of her period. Had she lived now she would have been a candid materialist, and perhaps a worse woman, for sentimentality occasionally has its uses. Even then, among her intimate friends, her private attitude to her husband and other men can only be described as hard-boiled, although she would have shuddered away from the word and its implications. Now, doubtless, she would not. Doubtless, also, she would be far less successful in what she had undertaken.

She was of the temperature of a frozen salad, and her most exciting emotion was that of gratified vanity, for she had no more acute response than that for anyone. She was fortunate, too, in that she never became satiated, but showed infantile pleasure at any tribute, however slight, even from a servant. These naturally, with the wisdom of Africa, soon learned the swiftest and simplest way to impromptu gratuities. A part of her conscious superiority to men was her pride in this coldness, a pride, rather curiously, shared by many women of her place and time, and the vigorous interest sometimes unguardedly shown by "poor Lucien" was encouraged only in so far as was definitely necessary to her comfort. For Lucien himself was necessary to her physical comfort, her economic situation being medieval.

This situation made her contempt for males especially striking, as she has been brought up to believe that they alone were able to get what was so indispensable to her, and there seemed no basis for it except that, in her experience with them, she found them the reverse of cool and contained. Then,

too, they were apt to be hungry at intervals, which she regarded as an equal weakness. It was rumored that she herself was not utterly indifferent to food, but she concealed the fact in public.

Her conceit was perhaps her greatest charm. Here there was nothing hard-boiled, nothing ingrowing, only a child-like naïveté. Her eagerness for compliments was almost lovable, and her honest pleasure in them flowed over herself and everyone present like a warm, gay, golden tide, for her vanity never became complacency, which prevented her from being an irritation. No more delightful spectacle could be imagined than Mrs. Sulgrave surrounded by a masculine group properly keyed to the occasion, and no more torturing one than Mrs. Sulgrave confronted by an unappreciative male. This, too, long after her youth was gone, for I cannot remember her until that time. Her little house also, was ornate and gay, gayer than would seem possible for a mid-Victorian house to be. With its garden, sloping down to the Rappahannock, where the self-important, noisy little steamers slipped past the dark-red town to the Chesapeake Bay, it held the same atmosphere of casual going and coming inside its walls. Suggestions of parties clung to the place, even when not actually in progress, for she adored them and merely existed from the last one to the next.

In a corner of the drawing-room was a large stuffed peacock, poised on a stand, shimmering tail outspread in the light of a window, against which Mrs. Sulgrave sat, on a gilt sofa with rose cushions. In another corner of the room stood a small statue, the Greek Slave, which she had bought, she often remarked, because the figure was so like her own. Indeed her long, slim lines, never making angles, only curves, were noticeable at a time when most women of her age allowed themselves hips, and they would be good even now if her shoulders had been a trifle less sloping. Most of the older furniture, hopelessly at odds with peacocks, Greek

slaves, rose and gilt, was collected in the library, named so in memory of some quaint, ante-bellum tradition, for Mrs. Sulgrave almost never read, and Lucien's meek recreation was gardening. When she read at all, she was apt to choose biographies rather than novels, for these furnished her with impressive facts for conversation on ponderous occasions, and books, like men, were created not for the enjoyment of the moment, but to serve one's purpose.

Lucien's taste in flowers ran riot in yellow pansies, which Mrs. Sulgrave gratified him by using in finger bowls, but she did not care for flowers promiscuously about the house, because, as she quite reasonably contended, they "made dirt," and her later life was passed in a period when servants were not as the sands of the sea.

Everyone about her, however, was trained to wait upon her, and every younger woman who stayed with her left the house entirely fitted to be lady's maid to the most exigent of employers. Lucien was preëminent in this capacity, and would emerge from his tower room in the gingerbread house at the slightest signal from Mrs. Sulgrave. Even a pretty niece with engrossing affairs of her own was required to be on duty for an amazing proportion of the time, and spent more hours listening to the story of Mrs. Sulgrave, past and present, than Mrs. Sulgrave to hers. The lady's daughter, as a matter of fact, was the single exception to this rule. The owner of the peacock was a really great utilitarian, and everything in itself, her house and her family, was used for one purpose. She was never turned aside from the main issue, the admiration of the multitude, and she managed to cast a glamour about herself and all of her possessions. While she was alive she was never disinterestedly discussed and dissected. With only a reasonable amount of good looks she created an impression of beauty. With less than a reasonable amount of intelligence she produced an impression of wit. When she entered a room, with her head held

as no woman now with a sense of humor would dare hold her head, and her shoulders back in the fashion of her day, she seemed actually to spread iridescent feathers.

During the years that I knew her she wore floating draperies of no particular fashion, tea gowns predominating, and her soft, fine-grained, dead-white skin never changed from year to year. Nor did her hair, for at eleven o'clock when she appeared downstairs her glossily waved "transformation" was securely in place, and she was not to be seen without it. Her hair must have been unfortunate, but she never referred to it, nor did anyone else. For a long time I believed implicitly that the river and the boats, as well as the house and Lucien and the peacock and the pansies and the Greek Slave, were hers. She seemed timeless, and the older people who saw that her dry, blanched skin, her straight, supple figure and her glacé hair did not change from year to year must have wondered if she was as soullessly immortal as her peacock; age and wisdom realizing, beyond a doubt, that a gloriously supreme selfishness is an unrivaled embalming fluid, more effica-

cious than all the honey and spices which preserve the Pharaohs.

Strangely enough, however, she eventually died—in an obscure country rectory, for Lucien, lacking the infallible preservative, had left her some time before, with no background for herself or her peacock. Like most of his breed he was not clever at making money, and what he could scrape together had been used to maintain intact the shining presence in his household. In the alien atmosphere of the rector's house, although her attitude and gesture remained, the iridescence faded. Then, when she was nothing more substantial than dry, white skin and straight, brittle bones, she dissolved one evening alone in her room, as quietly as a white mist scattered from a powder puff. And, with me, there is no proof that she was ever here except a jewel-case of rose-wood and mother-of-pearl—queer little drawers with unexpected doors—given her long ago by one of the mob of men in whose enduring devotion she so charmingly and youthfully believed. But the peacock, the other peacock, stands deserted in a shadowy corner of a country rectory.



## Mackerel Sky

*By Virginia Taylor McCormick*

*MACKEREL sky, and the silver scales  
Lie in a pattern intricate,  
As milk will run from an upturned cup  
In circles upon a blue Delft plate.*

*Mackerel sky, with its hint of rain,  
And the fisherman hurries to clear his trawl,  
While the moon draws into her veils of cloud  
As a woman wraps herself in a shawl.*



# 11:30 to 3:00

(*A Text Book for Students of Insomnia*)

By Charles G. Shaw

## I

THE clock in the *Times* building is striking eleven, the theatres and moving-picture parlors are emptying, the Wrigley's dancing-men are capering in concert, the one-way streets have become no-way streets, the latest cigarette is heralded in blazing lights, the sidewalks teem with bustle and dash. It is Saturday night in Long-acre Square.

"Number one hundred and twenty-four," shouts the starter in front of the Gaiety and Mrs. Van Allington Schultz trips mincingly to the curb and scrambles into her brand-new Rolls-Royce. Sunday papers are being shrieked on the corner, commuters are just missing the eleven-ten for Corona, traffic police are sounding shrill whistles. Soon the racket will have abated, soon there will be an exodus from the stage-doors, soon the game will be on. Everyone is rushing to get somewhere. It is the spirit of unrest, the spirit of New York, and one who is caught in this swirling eddy cannot well help being swept along with the tide. Tomorrow is a day of repose—a day of lolling, of dressing gowns, of bath slippers, of late breakfasts, of comic supplements, of yawning. But tonight my hopes and pockets are full; I am for a fling at foolery and fandango.

The glitter of a smile from a maiden in a green hat flashes past and I am almost demolished by a mail-truck. I bump into a superannuated couple who are making for the nearest subway entrance and am, in turn, jostled by a trio of jubilant, giggling shop-girls. There

is merriment abroad; there is mischief in the air. I hail a checkered taxi and bid the driver bear me to the Club du Montmartre.

Of all Broadway supper restaurants Montmartre is the most universally known. Presided over by the ever-engaging and efficient Charlie Journal, it has retained its popularity among the night-hawks of the town for the past decade; since its days of rose and white plaid table-cloths, of exotically painted walls, of Hawaiian orchestras, of Doral-dina, Montmartre has nocturnally echoed to the tread of Terpsichore and the clatter of carousal. Broadway, Fifth Avenue, Wall Street, the upper West Side, Hollywood and Princeton are all represented; there is a touch of the stage, of society, of sport. One sees oil magnates and sopranos, dowagers and chorus girls, débutantes and press agents. One sees ex-husbands and ex-wives, in the arms of more sympathetic partners, buffeting each other on the dance floor. One sees sexagenarians supping flappers in their teens, and across the room, their sophisticated sons making merry with more matronly damsels.

The habitués are almost invariably seated on the left or directly opposite the music, the newcomers on the right. The walls are decorated in black and white fluted silk and the lights are dim. Whatever be the season, the restaurant is sure to be crowded, it often being necessary for Charlie (who, incidentally, has never been known to accept a tip) to produce tables and chairs from a mysterious chamber adjoining the kitchen.

Immediately beneath is Lew Leslie's Plantation where Florence Mills, a copper-tinted songstress, carols "Come On Home," "Hawaiian Night in Dixieland" and "Aggravatin' Papa, Don't You Try to Two-Time Me" among divers other selections. The revue, which abounds with melody and mirth, begins at half past twelve and again at two o'clock.

In tone, the room is almost as Stygian as its entertainers and is so arranged as to suggest a musical comedy image of a Southern setting. A huge sliced watermelon forms the ceiling above the dance floor and a back-drop, depicting the Swanee River, on which a papier maché steamboat plies its hesitating course, is directly behind Will Vodery's jazz-band orchestra. A bandannaed mammy juggles flap-jacks and waffles in a property log-cabin on the left as you enter. Almost everyone is in evening things. One comes to dance rather than to sup, yet to view the show rather than to dance.

Surely the craze for the sable-skinned cuties that has swept New York within the past year is in no way an unprecedented one. For example, note the picturesque romance of *La Bouchaisse*, favorite of Louis XV, a young African maid, which affair was soon an open secret throughout the court. And inquire of any intelligent Frenchman why the statue of *La Bouchaisse*, in the the *Palace Gaillot*, is fashioned of bronze.

The Plantation is at its height during the winter months, when it is often packed to its revolving doors. If you find difficulty in locating this restaurant, look for the Nubian cab-starter in a top hat and opera cloak.

At the southeast corner of Sixth Avenue and Fortieth Street stands the *Palais des Beaux Arts*, the most ancient of existing frolic factories in town. John and Emil have been its proprietors since 1922, succeeding the late André Bustanoby, and the affable Alevy, whose perfect manners have graced the resort for so many years, presides as *maître d'hôtel*. He is assisted by the swarthy Alfred, an able fellow.

The *Beaux Arts* boasts of three public dining-rooms (though the *Rose Room* is no more) in addition to several private cabinets. In the basement is a dancing salon where I espy a group of varied types. In the corner is a patent-leather-haired Argentinian endeavoring to point out to a hazel-eyed minx the merits of monarchical régime. The lovely one is pretending to listen and, simultaneously, conduct a flirtation with a bald-headed alderman opposite, who sports a diamond shirt-stud and white socks. Not far away two bond salesmen are discussing the prospects of certain telephone numbers. In the centre is the dance floor and at half past twelve there is given a revue. It is much the same as any other cabaret revue, with the customary coryphées and songs about "daddies" and "sweeties." Banjo Wallace is the *chef d'orchestre*.

A flight of marble steps leads to another, immediately above, known as the *Parisien Room*, which is apt to close early. In the latter, with its marble floor, its mirrored walls and fluted columns, I sip my coffee to the distant strain of melody from below. It was here that, until the passage of Prohibition, the ladies' bar was located—a rendezvous of gladness in the days of hobble skirts and "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee." It was here that poppy-colored "Infuriators" were once quaffed over baize-covered playing-card boards and bottles cracked over copies of *La Vie Parisienne* and bagatelle. Noisette of lamb la Rochelle, sole Marguéry, and shad roe à la Newburg are the specialties of the *Parisien Room*: Robert is one of its most efficient servitors.

The *Gold Room* or *Studio Restaurant* is on the top floor of the building and the current hostess is Lillian Lorraine, who still warbles as winningly as she used to in the age of Hammerstein's Victoria and Alexander cocktails. Paul Capron, from Voisin's, is the chef; and spaghetti à la Studio and breast of chicken à la Capron are among the gastronomic masterpieces. The name of the cigarette girl is May.

As a rule, dancing ceases in the Gold Room at the ordained hour of two o'clock though, every now and then, there is a "carnival," embellished with streamers, confetti, paper hats and other form of tinselled lah-de-dah. This restaurant holds more memories for me than any other in all New York.

## II

Just why it is that one café will succeed where another fails is one of those mysteries that has as yet remained unsolved. Surely the majority of factors that make for a successful café nowadays are almost wholly artificial, undeserved, illogical. That a certain group frequents it, that it is mainly patronized by "those in the know," or that one is obliged to wear evening clothes are a few of the frothy reasons that are sufficient for a supper restaurant to catch on. And once that it does catch on, there is no stopping it—at least, for a while. Then a rival opens across the way and its former habitués all flock thither.

As a resort for the débutante, the matron of the *beau monde* and the college youth on vacation, the Club Royal, under the management of A. Borgo, formerly of Paris, by way of Castles-by-the-Sea, is, perhaps, the most typical after-the-theatre restaurant in New York. I do not mean to suggest that it is merely an after-the-theatre restaurant, for that would be untrue. Nor do I intend to tell you that its patronage is entirely comprised of débutantes, fashionable women or college boys. Not at all. There is a distinct smattering of Forty-second Street, of the silk district, of downtown. Its interior throughout, with the exception of an unnecessarily ornate frieze of rotund cupids, is far and away the most engaging of any of the metropolitan supper resorts. Its cuisine is excellent, its service admirable, its prices designed for the well-stuffed wallets. The music consists of a five piece orchestra under the direction of the noteworthy Markell and evening dress is obligatory. Though

somewhat off the customary course of the luminiferous dazzle of Broadway, the Club Royal continues nightly to draw no inconsiderable crowds to its yellow stuccoed façade.

Gypsyland, in West Forty-fifth Street, is an outgrowth of an establishment of a similar appellation that recently flourished in East Eighty-first Street. It is a one flight walk-up. Nothing much transpires in Gypsyland until the night is well under way; then a Romany orchestra strikes up and a couple, in Eaves' Polish costumes, perform a vivacious mazurka. The main room is long and narrow and the tables are arranged against the walls: for the most part, the clientèle is made up of stage folk or those, in one way or another, connected with the theatrical or motion-picture world. After a certain hour, which may vary from twelve till considerably later, various patrons, introduced by Nils Granlund, the proprietor, will do their bit in the shape of warbling a ditty, making a speech or clogging a few fancy shuffles. Whether their efforts be greeted with applause, with laughter or with boos, there is a continual din, a perpetual hubbub. Yet with all its clatter and jangle, its mumble and jumble, its clash and racket, the gaiety or Gypsyland is wholly spontaneous, volative, genuine.

At this point, a fact peculiar to New York cabarets I would note—to wit: those possessing the showiest and flashiest exteriors are almost invariably the dullest and most staid of establishments, just as the liveliest are, often enough, curiously depressing and dreary looking from the outside. Once that a restaurant has sufficiently established its clientèle, it makes small matter what the effect be from the street. That it is said to be "the" place is enough. Then the most dismal of exteriors will fail to frighten the multitude.

A converted brown-stone dwelling in East Fifty-Seventh Street has become a Moscow mansion with the aid of the brush of the able Artzybasheff, whose brilliantly colored panels depict kings, knights, butterflies and demons in semi-

symbolical fantasy. It is called the Russian Eagle and is at once discernible by the gilded crest of the creature after which it is named. Georges Debres is the *maître d'hotel* and a young princess, the vendor of cigarettes.

In the oblong room, with its starred ceiling, one sits at small black tables and sips *kwass*. Candlelight is the sole illumination and curtains of purple China silk form the draperies: the director of the orchestra is Leonid Bolotin, who makes strange, fetching melodies with a violin. The coat attendant is adorned in Cossack costume and the waiters are in loose-fitting yellow tunics. From eleven o'clock until closing hour every square inch of the Eagle is likely to be occupied and I would advise making reservations in advance. Among its special dishes are ragout of lamb Caucasian, Muscovite pastry and Sachee. The caviar is dished out at five dollars a spoonful! In the smoke-laden chamber you will view a polygot gathering of singers, diplomats, stage stars, women of fashion, painters and buyers from the Bronx. They are all talking feverishly.

At 33 West Thirty-seventh Street is the Russian Inn, a retreat rather less elaborate than the Eagle, though possessing several of the latter's features. On the considerably more severe walls are portrayed, in vermilion, green and orange, fabulous animals and twisted towns, the ceiling is high and the waitresses are in Russian garb. In place of candles are cream-colored crystal lanterns and, at eleven o'clock, a pianist plays. The specialties of the Inn are red caviar, Kooleebraka, Bitok with Smetana and Kakuska. Kakuska is sardines and olives.

I cannot help feeling a certain immaturity about the place that is a bit disquieting, a certain tearoom tidiness that contrasts strangely with the massiveness of its mural decorations. It is in no way a dressy resort, many of the feminine element appearing in batik smocks and their bearded escorts in heavy-soled boots. M. Jestern is the manager of the Inn.

Still another rendezvous of Russian genus is the Club Petroushka in East Fiftieth Street. This is the latest of the lot and boasts a really engaging orchestra under the leadership of one Samuels. The decorations are the efforts of Remischeff and the cover charge is two dollars.

Now that the current fashion for the Chauve-Souris, the Moscow Art Theatre and the Bakst exhibit is on the town, it is but natural that the more impressionable of us should be equally entranced by the Russian cuisine. Is there not magic in the very sound of those dishes: Blinee, Lesneekee, Varenneekee, Poshkarshki? I recommend the Poshkarshki in particular. This consists of a reddish sausage, about four inches in length, which is inserted lengthwise into a sliced roll; a sauce strangely like mustard is employed as the garniture. The price of Poshkarshki is eighty-five cents. There is Sliankleek, another delicacy. Then à la Russe, which is composed of several slices of fried liver, embellished with a poached egg, and is sold for the sum of one dollar fifty.

The Little Club, in the basement of the Forty-fourth Street Theatre, has altered not a little since the days when Justice Johnstone and later Billie Allen were its hostesses and, though still under the eye of the polite and pleasing N. Colle, who smiles as beamingly as ever, it caters to a gathering of a different calibre. Nowanights its toddlers would seem to represent a district further up town. As they wiggle to the Chicago, one is reminded of the hoochy-coochy of 1908 vintage. Jazz is the keynote of the Little Club, the effect of which has been reported by the distinguished Professor Roger W. Blenderstaff to produce a mercurial reaction upon the abdominal muscles. So intrigued were certain members of his university faculty with the professor's findings, that they determined to undertake a further investigation of the matter. Suffice it to say that less than three weeks later the eldest of the crew eloped with a bambino from the chorus

of "Shuffle Along." Victor Schertzen-ger's is the orchestra.

### III

A TYPE habitually encountered in the supper restaurants of today, is the embellished and bejeweled maiden who frequents such resorts, not for the purpose of supping, nor for dancing, nor for being amused; only to be seen is her aim. Extravagantly garbed, she disports herself from cabaret to cabaret. Her chatter is of the dullest variety imaginable, her point of view distressing beyond measure. Yet reproach her not—a vapid, shallow creature with brains for nothing else. The censure rests entirely with her escort who is idiot enough to tolerate such dismal society. Another brand of cafe-hound is the smug, self-satisfied man-of-the-world type. He is, more than often, a moving-picture director, a cloak buyer or a member of the Lake Mohonk Conference. The headwaiter addresses him with deference and a ring-side table is ever at his disposal. However crowded may be the resort, there is never the slightest difficulty in his securing accommodation: he is revered wherever the bright lights glisten. Of course, the deadliest of all restaurant pests is the professional trouble-maker—the fellow who is forever searching for a scrap. Happily enough, the majority of cafés are now provided with a sufficient staff of bouncers to deal with this variety of *schweinehund*.

In Fifty-first Street, just off Broadway, Joe Smallwood, of Midnight Frolic fame, has assumed the management of Monte Carlo, formerly the Club Maurice and prior to that under the direction of Miss Grace Fields. In its present treatment a better setting is presented to the public gaze in the large, low room, lit by countless lamps and decorated in a fluted magenta silk. The walls are punctuated at intervals with scenes of Monte Carlo and, as you masticate the breast of chicken Ideal "under bell" or nibble at the Malossal caviar, you glimpse, through grilled portals, a

mellow Mediterranean. The music is furnished by Myer Davis, whose syncopated strains formerly set feet a-prancing at the Tent, and a revue is projected at the witching hour. The chief charms of Monte Carlo are the absence of blare and bombilation, the spacious elbow room and a dance floor that fails to suggest a tin of Bordelaise boneless sardines.

Incidentally, in no other city in the world is the supper restaurant as well "done" as in New York. In all London, Paris or Vienna there is no dance music comparable with that of half a dozen cafés on Broadway. Nor is the dancing one quarter as skilful as in a New York restaurant.

From its resplendent entrance in Forty-eighth Street to its azure-tinted backdrop in the southern extremity, the Palais Royal has undergone a complete transformation. A heavily-carpeted hallway leads to a large, brilliantly lighted room, the distinguishing features of which are the decorations of Norman-Bel Geddes, representing dancers in bas-relief, the jingling jazz of Paul Whiteman's band and a group of underwear manufacturers from Cleveland. At the door, beside an enormous buffet containing California grapes, peaches in cotton, wild strawberries, baked Alaskas, patisserie and the like, is stationed Louis, the *maitre d'hotel*. Twelve o'clock produces a group of not unlovely lasses who execute a sylph-like dance, suggestive of a Warren Davis drawing and a Russian number follows. On neatly printed cards the management requests that its guests refrain from indulging in intoxicating liquors.

The Palais is essentially of Broadway—Broadway on its party behavior, Broadway with its hair vaselined, with its dancing shoes on and a flush on its face—crowded, noisy, gay.

Above The Piccadilly, in Forty-fifth Street, is the Rendezvous, the setting of the silvery-voiced, hip-rolling Gilda Gray, who, in South Sea Island garb and assisted by a group of barefoot damsels, trills nightly to the "Pow-Pow" at the hours of one and two-

thirty. Caricatures of various actors, actresses, opera singers, theatrical producers, composers and types familiar to New York night life, comprise the mural adornments which are the labors of Richard d'Asir, the designer of those distorted settings for that fantastic moving-picture, "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari." "The Collegians," a group of talented college lads, compose the orchestra.

Over the jingle and jangle the chatter of gossip filters. Someone has discovered Leontine La Vere having a tête-à-tête with Oscar Splat, while "Mercedes" devours crab flakes à la Mornay with Reggie Sibbleton. Yet everyone realizes that Splat can afford almost anything and as for Mrs. Reggie—well, she doesn't give a rap what Reggie does or where he does it.

"Good evening, Mr. Schmidt," bows the urbane F. Zani, "the squab is very delicious tonight." And Mr. Schmidt orders a roast beef sandwich.

Among the favorite dishes of the Rendezvous are lamb chops Vert Pré, shrimps Madras Rice Pilaff and stuffed lobster Inferno. A quart of White Rock fetches one and a half simoleons and a Lemonade Cup thrice that amount.

At one end of the room are booths, closely resembling horse-stalls, garnished with cheese-cloth. Nine out of ten of the assembly are in evening clothes and the "Sheik of Alabam'" is the most featured dance number.

Forty-second Street and Broadway! Centre of bright lights, symbol of theatrical success, site of the old Knickerbocker Hotel, the Knickerbocker Hotel where, in pre-Volstead days, you could dine or sup in one of several rooms or toss off cocktails in the bar, beneath the renowned Parrish panel of Old King Cole. What remains of it all is the Grill—the same Grill but in a brand-new setting. It is strangely bright, fresh and spick and span, its snow-white wall spaces broken at intervals by huge tapestries and mirrors. To the left is Eddie Elkins' orchestra, beneath a crimson canopy, and at twelve o'clock there is a revue, a revue of prancing

cuties. About half the gathering is in evening dress and represents no particular group; there is a touch of all types. The headwaiter is Peter, the cigarette-girl is a lovely French brunette, and Mike, formerly of the Café des Beaux Arts, is the stately doorman.

\* \* \*

That the average New York restaurant is today employed as a theatre of amorous operation cannot be doubted. To verify this statement, gaze about. Fully three-quarters of the occupants will either be in the throes of love-making or else preparing the path for such fashion of divertissement.

\* \* \*

For cuisine that is far above the ordinary combined with perfect seclusion, I name the Exclusive Club in West Forty-seventh Street, though its brownstone façade would scarcely suggest that within there exists a supper restaurant of the first order. It is true that the furnishings are dismal and that a certain creepiness hangs about the scrolled mahogany cornices and faded plush draperies but, then, there are moments when one would sup in silence, particularly if the food be fetching. I strongly recommend the frogs' legs Milanaise, the South American quail, and the spaghetti, however it be styled. The quiet of the room is occasionally interrupted by a group of young Hawaiians who strum native strains upon ukuleles made in Germany. The Exclusive Club is not at all inexpensive.

"So This Is Paris," in blazing electric lights, sparkles above the entrance to the Moulin Rouge on Broadway though what one beholds within its portals could hardly be said to be in the least Parisien. If its clientèle be at all representative of the establishment, the picture is one of Akron, Sioux City, St. Joseph, Reading, Chanute, Elmira, or Delaware Water Gap. If its culinary efforts be typical of its nationality, I am unable to detect the veriest vestige of the city of the Seine. In brief, its sole suggestion of Paris lies in the names of a few of the less engaging cafés of that city scrawled upon its walls. An

elaborately staged revue is presented nightly at the Moulin Rouge.

The enormous lavender lamps that cast forth their luminous glow upon pale verdant walls may suggest the decorative qualities of the Strand Cascades. And there is a real waterfall! The cuisine is not unalluring while a "Special Vermouth" non-alcoholic cocktail may be had for forty sous. Skelly's is the band and a show of shapely belles eventuates at twelve o'clock.

\* \* \*

Certain familiar domestics, without which all restaurants would be happier, I here note: the headwaiter, who invariably suggests the most expensive and unappetizing dishes on the menu, the wash-room assistant who is forever brushing at imaginary specks of dust, the coat-room girl who continually giggles and the cab-starter who makes the greatest ado while failing to produce a taxi.

#### IV

It is just around the corner on Seventh Avenue and occupies that space where once the Side Show hung its scintillating sign: the color scheme is red and white. There is plenty of room to dance; at intervals during the evening Schubert's orchestra descends from its seat of dignity and camps itself in the centre of the floor. Brooke Johns flits facetiously about, soliciting requests for one's favorite melody and occasionally he will tickle the banjo. This rendezvous is called the Tent and is no haunt for the impecunious fellow.

On the second floor of what was once George Rector's and later, the Café de Paris, is now located the Boardwalk, advertised as: "A Bit O'Beach on Broadway." Most of this beach occupies the hall of the vestibule through which you pass prior to the checking of your hat. The marble stairway is the same as of old. Within the crowded, rackety room dancing, supping and a performance transpire, the respective features of which are wholly undistinguishable from the dancing,

supping and performances you may have witnessed elsewhere. The walls are so designed as to produce an al fresco effect of a seaside promenade and a ghostly, olive light gives one the pallor of an absinthe addict. All the chairs have on their summer suits, which are of broad green and white stripes, and parasols hang from a starlit sky of blue.

"Don't Bring Me Posies When It's Shoesies That I Need," from Selvin's Boardwalk Orchestra, rends the air and couples go whirling about the room—couples in evening dress, in golf clothes, in everyday business garb, laughing, bored, rhapsodic, jaded, youthful couples. There is a clatter of silverware and a clinking of glasses. Somewhere a tray of plates falls with a thunderous crash, somewhere a kiss is stolen beneath a picture hat, somewhere a grizzled business man is telephoning his gullible spouse. Clash go the cymbals; bang goes the tambourine. "Waiter, another order of orange juice."

Below the Earl Carroll Theatre, in Seventh Avenue, is the Ringside, a retreat for the pugilistic element who would demonstrate the agility of their footwork to the melody of "Hot Lips" and "Way Down Yonder in New Orleans" by Al Seigel's band. Every Thursday is "Sport Night," on which occasion Benny Leonard assumes the role of master of ceremonies. The dance floor is roped off as a prize-ring and the room is decorated after the manner of the Club du Montmartre, in black and white. Mysterious steam pipes vie with the orchestra in producing the jingle of 1923 jazz.

To omit the mention of such centres of carousal as Healy's and Murray's would indeed be unjust. Surely, for the past decade or more, these restaurants have diverted no small percentage of the midnight sons and daughters of the town—Healy's, now remodeled into private rooms, and Murray's with its "Roman Gardens" and revolving dance floor and palate-tickling Welsh rabbits.

Among another group are the Palais

de Danse, Peek In, Billy Gallagher's, the Blue Hour, the Nightingale, the Folies Bergere, the Marlborough and the Metamora. The last named, when under the management of the brothers Bustanoby was, perhaps, the gayest and liveliest supper restaurant in all the city—the forerunner of Louis Martin's, the Domino Room and "Sans Souci."

Then there is a further type of after-the-theatre pleasure-place—a type in no sense out for the dinner-jacket, velvet-gowned gatherings of certain establishments previously recorded. On the contrary, no one is in evening dress. And so we have the Clover Gardens in the Grand Central Palace, and, on Broadway, Roseland, "The Home Of Refined Dancing," and Bluebird Dancing. These halls are all spacious, crowded and highly respectable. Saturday is the gala night at each when you may view fox-trots and waltzes, one-steps and two-steps executed to the same melody.

Still a more recent touch along the Gay White Way is the chop-suey-dancing restaurant—Yoeng's, Som Toy's and Chin Lee's. They are much alike and are all reasonable in price: none is, in the least, fashionable. Among their tastiest dishes are Lan Far Chow Mein, Bark Choy Gai, Moe Goo Gai Pan and Gumgot. The tea at each of these resorts is excellent.

A word anent a raft of supper "clubs," membership to which requires but a few seconds and a bill of the proper denomination. The presidency, secretaryship, treasury and board of governors are customarily invested in a single individual who is stationed at the entrance. The juniper and barley berry are served in all of them, so it is not for me to divulge names. Frequently they are raided, though the management will usually have prepared for such interruption. Drinks are whisked from the tables, the dancing stops and an air of demeanor creeps over the scene. The "members" all suddenly become subdued gentle folk. "Surely a mistake must have been made. The wrong address, perhaps. No, nothing like that

here. Good night." And as the ponderous portal slams, the band strikes up and another round is tossed down.

## V

WHIP up the dappled stallion and hesitate not till Harlem is reached—Harlem, the home of phonographs, stock-companies, nickelodums, pawnshops, Hurtig and Seamon's and Nicholas Murray Butler. At Columbus Circle I cast a glance at the Far East Gardens, above Childs' most famed branch, and light a José de Villa. Along upper Broadway a horde of dancing haunts sparkle: Bustanoby's, Edgett's Harbor Inn, Beefsteak Charlie's, Bussoni's Danceland, the Chateau Shanley and Archambault's. On Columbus Avenue is Comerford's, formerly the lower section of Healy's, where golden bucks and silver fizzes were once engulfed, and at One Hundred and Fourth Street is Gossler's "Campus," which specializes in seagoing delicacies. Besides these are a host of chop-suey establishments: King Joy Lo's, Jung Sy's, The Pacific, The Canton, Lock Yin's and The Royal that blaze in brilliance. But it is time to turn east, and soon I am blinded by the glare of One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Street.

Of the Coontown cafés I name Shuffle Inn, the Capitol, "Happy" Rone's and Barron's. They are all strangely alike. What struck me most was a painting in Barron's—a painting of the Fifteenth Regiment entering into battle while their stalwart commander, Colonel W. Hayward, statuesquely gazes after them!

But I would chronicle of another resort—a place wholly dissimilar in character from any previously named, but possessing a definite genuineness, a complete absence of ostentation, an unaffected atmosphere. Externally, it suggests a third-rate pool-parlor, a dismal dance hall. But within, what a surprise! Not in the quality of decoration, not in the type of patronage, not in the outward show, itself. No bowing headwaiter escorts you to your table, no

smirking assistant suggests some idiotic entrée, no fawning "wine card" fellow foists upon you a ridiculous non-alcoholic cider-cup. None of this baggage. But there is, in lieu of such sham and splash, admirable service, delicious food, and the most unvarnished of gaiety. A realness, almost wholly absent along Broadway, rings through its baroque walls, a definite savor of the Hopfenblüthe, of the Pschorrbräu. In the main room, lit by an electrically wired elk's antlers, you may pass the evening in pinochle to the muffled music of a Strauss waltz. The name of the establishment: Maennerchor Hall; the location: in the upper Fifties.

Yet one need not be confined to restaurants for supper dancing. Hotels are not lacking. And thus, there is the Cascades, atop the Biltmore, where, in an enormous Warren and Wetmore ball-room, pirouetting patrons in evening attire, dispatch all possibility of beauty slumber. The ceiling is high and the lights are low. Not a razzle-dazzle haunt Cascades, but the type of place where you would sup with the débutante party, with whom you have just attended the Hippodrome.

The Plaza is of a vastly different character in size, decoration and feeling. Situated in the basement of the hotel, it has become especially popular with flappers, collegians and youthful married out-of-towners. It is cheery, comfortable and, curiously enough, well ventilated. The dance floor is covered with a type of linoleum and, in addition to the ringside tables, there are others in lacquered booths.

At the Pennsylvania the roof is used in Summer and the grill in Winter. Vincent Lopez's orchestra manufactures the music and the rooms are brilliantly lighted and crowded chiefly with a middle-Western gathering.

Another retreat is the Moorish Grill of the Ambassador, where you may harken to the melody of Barnaby's Hungarian band, from Monte Carlo. The room is a low, square one, illuminated by tiny, parchment-shaded lamps and embellished with an occasional palm

tree: on the Arabesque walls mirrors are set. Cortez and Peggy, formerly of the Beaux Arts, kick up their heels to Spanish and South American jingles.

Then there is the Vanderbilt, where, in the Della Robbia Room, a tail-coated, low-necked assembly continue the show till well into the night. Everything is perfectly arranged, everyone is immaculately groomed, nothing remarkable ever happens. The music is by the Vanderbilt orchestra.

If you would sup in evening garb to the strain of skilled musicians, try the Crystal Room of the Ritz. It is not large, seldom crowded and attractively decorated: in no sense can it be termed gay. Its name is derived from the character of an enormous chandelier, composed entirely of bits of crystal, that adorns the centre of the ceiling. The lights are soft and low and the semi-concealed orchestra, behind potted palms, is on the left as you enter.

How different the present supper restaurant from the lobster-palace of ten years ago! In the days of sealskin muff, the Maxixe and Mayor Gaynor the clientèle of the latter consisted chiefly of gay dogs and limelight cuties, fellows-in-the-know and gals of the town, whereas tonight one views a mixture of fashionable women, shoe clerks, Vassar undergraduates, motor-car magnates, stenographers, saleswomen and officials of the Anti-Saloon League. Surely it would seem that the income tax, woman suffrage and the late strife have made the New York cabaret safe enough for democracy.

I note a few soft drinks in current vogue: Morning Stars, Fig Soufflés, Lover's Habits, Midnight Talks, Royal Pineapples, White Lilies, Caramels à la Paris, Bananas à la Mode, and Ping Pong Sundaes. Spectres of the Messrs. Moët, Krug, Roderer, Hennessy, Gordon and the brothers Haig shake their solemn pates and troop on in silence.

Deep down in a cellar on West Broadway is Mazzini's Black Cat, the first of an interminable flock of Greenwich Village rendezvous named after every conceivable form of mammal. The main

room is long, narrow and dimly lighted; its principal plât is spaghetti—that leveler of all classes. It was here that, in former days “Bobby” Edwards strummed the ukulele to snatches of doggerel verse, but of late, what entertainment there is has assumed the shape of Terpsichorean endeavor which is conducted in a small space several steps above the long, brick-walled chamber. The music is produced by an orchestra that presents an almost perfect imitation of that type of piano into which you drop nickels, a device once so familiar in certain roadhouses. In the front room is a mass of hand-painted furniture that reeks of gift shops, tea-rooms, batik emporiums, vers libre, water colors and the Village.

Not a stone’s throw away are a dozen other haunts where one may engage in supper or the dance. Thus Luigi’s, the Caserta Royal Gardens, Little Hungary, Mori’s, The Four Trees, The Pirate’s Den, The Greenwich Village Inn, The Greenwich Village Mill, The Bat, The Blue Horse, The Pepper Pot, The Golden Eagle and “uptown” Kelly’s are among the most frequented. At the Four Trees, in Christopher Street, you caper to “subdued music” by a Venetian Quartette in a low, shadowy, stuccoed room, the design of one Camprubi, a fellow of no mean artistry. “Surprise in Every Bite” and “Blushing Bunny” are among its favorite supper dishes.

But there is more gaiety to be gleaned, more ginger ale to be consumed, more Melachrinos to be inhaled. I grab my coat, my hat and a taxi.

## VI

THE cab swings into Macdougall Street and draws up at the curb, opposite the Provincetown Theatre. In flashing electric lights I behold: “Club Gallant” and knock at a glass-paneled door, a few feet below the street level. It is ultimately opened by the dapper Barney, formerly of the Greenwich Inn, who ushers me to a corner table in a long room with a low ceiling. The walls are buff-colored and hung with caricatures of such famous fellows as

Eugene O’Neill, John Emerson, Will Rogers, Frank Crowninshield, Nikita Ballief and John Drew—the efforts of Miss Clara Tice, Herb Roth, Rube Goldberg and De Fornaro among others. At the far end of the diminutive dance floor stands a miniature stage where a performance is presented about half past twelve. The Quartet Gallant serve the syncopation under the direction of George Morris, once of the concert stage. Josef Pogliare, a Sicilian, is the chef, whose specialties include spaghetti Caruso, and Renée the hat-girl.

The room is packed and everyone is ranting. At a ring-side table I glimpse Jack Dempsey and, nearby, “Mr.” Gallagher. Four Williams students are informed that every table is taken and the girl next to me upsets a glass of something over her escort. The air is heavy with cigarette smoke and a certain fatigue steals over me. I settle for the White Rock and lemon juice and dreamily proceed to collect my habiliments. Outside a few gray streaks are commencing to creep over the roof of the New York University Law School while Washington Square looks hopelessly forlorn; the great arch is dismal and dirty. In front of the Brevoort I nab a taxi and direct the fellow to drive up Fifth Avenue. Dawn is rapidly breaking and straggling groups of Italian laborers are setting off for their day in the trenches. How the poor Avenue has altered! In the place of what were once charming dwellings are now bleak office buildings, occupied by silk and woolen merchants. The Volmersteins and Leveys have supplanted the Van Burens and Lispenards, while the private residence in lower Fifth has practically become a thing of the past. At Madison Square the clock in the Metropolitan Tower tells me it is almost six! Shades of Martin’s, the Holland House, old Delmonico’s, the Bartholdi and Sherry’s loom up on either side. At Fifty-ninth Street we turn east and draw up at Madison Avenue, where I alight and enter a restaurant that never closes: be it Sunday or week-day, Summer or Winter, the doors of Rueben’s

are ever open. Nor is it empty at this hour. I am surrounded by portly glass counters—counters containing pickles, perfume, cheese, candies, caviar, salads, steamer-baskets, tinned goods, jellies, sealing wax, preserves, tobacco, powder-puffs and a thousand and one other commodities. At a table in the rear of the mission-paneled room, I command scrambled eggs, a “Rueben’s Special,” and coffee. Directly opposite are a couple in evening clothes who titter inanely at each other’s platitudes and, further on, reclines a youth in fancy costume, over which he has draped a huge bear-skin overcoat; a pale-faced, leaden-eyed

stock-broker munches dill-pickles in the corner. He is engaged in a morning paper, which he has spread out before him, and I cannot help but note the headlines. I gaze again. But what’s all this? In glaring three-inch letters I read: “Congress to Pass Bill Embracing Enforcement of Universal Prohibition. Smoking to Be No More; Dancing to Be Exterminated: A Curfew to Be Sounded Every Night at Nine O’Clock Throughout Land. Kissing to Be Abolished. Rigid Investigation of Morals—”

But enough! I halt. I can go no further.



## Dilemma

*By Kathleen Cotter-Gross*

SHALL I loose my hair  
To the sun’s gold light  
Or brush and bind it  
Sleek and tight?

Shall I dance to music  
Fast and sweet  
Or languid, sit  
With quiet crossed feet?

Shall my first long skirt  
Be crisp and white  
Or a silken serpent  
Black as night?

Shall my laughter be  
As a bird that flies  
Or gathered close  
In my dreaming eyes?

If one should say  
*I love* to me,  
Shall I wait for another,  
Or two, or three?



# Gilbert Becomes Clever

*By Donald Barr*

## I

**"HOW,"** asked Gilbert, "can I be like you?"

The Big Man smiled.

"Well. . . .

"That your own face you have there?" he said unexpectedly.

"My own face? Why, of course!"

"I suspected as much," nodded the Big Man. "Your first requisite, *then*, is a mask. The world is full of them. Pick a good one, and—keep it on."

"But do you and all of your kind wear masks?" stammered Gilbert.

"Assuredly."

"The women too?"

"The women most of all."

"The human face," he went on, "is not generally considered so exquisite in design that it cannot be improved upon. Do not wait for evidence of Nature's failure before you turn to artifice. No one aspiring to what Women's Clubs call 'the better things of life,' ministers 'the teachings of the Devil,' and hoi polloi 'that art stuff'—can possibly afford to trust his original physiognomy. It has a propensity to primitive display and crude contortion by means of which even a comparative moron can estimate your prevalent emotion—and this, of course, is always undesirable. Therefore, get a falseface like mine"—the Big Man grasping his nose, pulled his countenance an inch or so away from the head to which you had thought it belonged, then let it snap back again—"and when you have done this come to me and I'll introduce you to some of the people who count. Perhaps in due time you might come to be almost as clever as I am, who knows?"

80

"Oh, thank you so much!" cried Gilbert; and hurried him off to find a good falseface.

## II

"How y' making out?" the Big Man inquired, some weeks later.

"Oh, I'm learning a lot," said Gilbert. "I can never thank you enough for getting me in with this bunch."

"Like the life?"

"Oh, yes," cried Gilbert. "It—I get sort of balled up sometimes. But I'm getting over that now."

"How's the falseface?"

"Well, it's that that gets me balled up—when it does. I go to say something, and somehow I say something else. At least, it doesn't seem really as though I do; it seems as though it were the falseface. I don't think I can explain. . . ."

"You don't have to."

"But I'm enjoying it immensely. They're awfully interesting people."

"The best," laconically observed the Big Man. "All clever."

"Should I—Do you ever take your falseface off?"

"Rarely, very rarely. Only some nights when I'm lying in bed; and then just for a few moments, because there's always that horrible feeling that somebody might come along with a light and see what you really look like."

"And that, of course," the Big Man added, "is only when I happen to be sleeping alone. . . ."

## III

Of all the wonderful new people he met, Thelma seemed to Gilbert to be the

most wonderful. Did Thelma, too, have a falseface? Oh, yes indeed! In fact, Thelma had quite a few of them, for she was a capricious little minx and dreaded monotony more than anything else in the world.

And for some reason Gilbert didn't like that: her having all those different masks. Inside of him he felt that it was somehow not proper in the case of a woman. Now, with a man it was different. . . . But a woman, Gilbert thought, should show only her own features as they actually were.

But he said nothing to this effect. Sometimes, indeed, he wanted to remonstrate with her, but his own falseface strangely prevented him. Inside he'd groan:

"God! if she would only give up those masks what an adorable thing she would be!"

But to the outward eye he remained eternally *blasé*.

And so it went on; and their friendship became love, and their love was not pure but it was pleasant. But she loved other men, and this also rankled Gilbert, who thought that she should love only him. His heart protested while his falseface said bright things.

Of course, he loved other women too, in that way. But with a man it was different. . . . Besides, it was the falseface, not himself, that seemed to bring him into acts of faithlessness to Thelma.

Still, that falseface was certainly invaluable. Thrown into confusion himself, he could always depend upon the falseface to get him out. It said remarkably brilliant things and said them just at the right moments. It never became flustered itself, never embarrassed or at a loss for words. In short, it was a very good falseface; without it Gilbert could never have held his own in the epigrammatic conversation that had become the bulk of his existence now.

One night it almost came off. The occasion remains a horrible memory to him.

He was throwing down a mistress forever. The woman wore a most dramatic falseface; she was ideally suited

for scenes of this sort, and she was doing this one perfectly. But at one point in her performance she grasped Gilbert's mouth, crying as she did so: "I shall tear, *tear* these lips out that they may never kiss another but me!"

Then the terrible thing happened. The woman pulled too hard, and Gilbert's falseface came half off. He shrieked with horror, and ran crazily from the room. Though he knew that everything was all right, it was hours before he really regained control over himself. Perspiration sprang to his face and he trembled all over, whenever he thought of it.

As for the woman, she refused to speak to him after that. She told her friends that she had never been thrown down forever so badly before in her life.

#### IV

AND so it went on; and Gilbert grew daily more unhappy, because in spite of the fact that he was now in with the best people (all clever), it disquieted him to see Thelma running around in one falseface after another.

And then—then came the wonderful thrill of joy when he entered the apartment of his Heart's Desire to find this person with all her masks hung on the wall. Gilbert knew them: there were eight of them.

"She has given them up!" he cried inwardly, his heart leaping. "She has given them up for my sake! She is going to be her own sweet self!"

Certainly Thelma had changed. There was a charming simplicity about her which had never been there before, and she was now quiet, shy, yet trustful. There was a look in her drooping eyes. . . .

"She is herself!" cried happy Gilbert inwardly. "She is her own sweet self again!"

His falseface, of course, merely chanted: "How lovely you look, my darling." But he worshiped as he had never worshiped before.

And she accepted this differently. She was become modest now, a loving but

shrinking bit of girlish innocence. Gilbert was in the seventh heaven of bliss. He wrapped loving arms around her. . . .  
 . . . Later, blushing, she came near again and whispered to him: "You haven't said whether you like my new falseface yet."

## V

"WHAT are you doing?" asked the Big Man.

"Trying to—tear—this damn thing—off," Gilbert panted, tugging as he spoke at his mask.

"What's the trouble, sick of it?"

Gilbert nodded vigorously.

"Well, you know how it is with this life," said the Big Man. "You have to pay—"

"The wages of sin is birth," flipped Gilbert lightly.

"Haw! not bad," said the Big Man. "'The wages of sin is birth.' I must remember that one."

Gilbert wrenched the mouth part off again.

"What I was trying to say just then," he explained, "was that this thing seems stuck to my face."

"They're apt to do that," admitted the Big Man. "You'll have to struggle with it. And you'll never get rid of the whole thing; tiny bits of it will cling to you for the rest of your life. You may not see them yourself, but others will."

Snap! went the falseface.

"How atrociously sincere you're getting," drawled Gilbert. "Sincerity is the cemetery of artistic impulses."

"Damn this thing!" he cried, a moment later, as he again wrenched the lower part of the falseface away from his bona fide countenance.

"Struggle, Gilbert, struggle with it," the Big Man chanted. "You wanted to mix with clever people and I got you in. But now you want to go back, you've got to get yourself there. I can't help you get back, Gilbert. Why you should prefer your own features to those of a mask I can't understand, but since you do—struggle! They're easy to put on, Gilbert, but they're awfully hard to get off."

\* \* \* \*

So it was that Gilbert became clever all of a sudden, and quite as suddenly became stupid again.



## Excuses

*By Robert de Ward*

I WISH the moon used rouge—  
 I do not like to forsake an old love.

For a long time I have worshiped her hair,  
 Long strands of silver on a brocade mauve gown—  
 Because of her hair I loved her,  
 Yet her pallor bored me.

Now I have found hair like moonbeams on new snow.  
 I am not to blame—I am fickle—  
 And one cannot love the dead.



# Children

*By Oscar Graeve*

## I

**D**ICK MUNSON did not go to Strepponi's on account of the girls.

He went there to drink. Occasionally, when life seemed flat, he drank himself into a glow of exhilaration in which life appeared a tremendously amusing affair, whereas otherwise it seemed a dull drudgery of attending to matters in which he took no possible interest.

Strepponi's, too, amused him. Especially after a few drinks.

Once there were a thousand other restaurants like it—Italian restaurants devoted to the cheap table d'hôte where, in every one, the minestrone followed the sardine and pimento and the salad the inadequately plucked chicken as inevitably as night follows day. Madam Strepponi sat at her desk, a rock amidst a flotilla of small tables covered with cloths from which the lint was forever pulling. Madam Strepponi's parrot sat beside her, uttering from time to time a piercing and derisive shriek. The waiters were soiled and respectful.

But the eighteenth amendment changed that. It succeeded in giving Strepponi's a certain individuality of its own. Madam, with newly purchased diamonds glittering in her dark ears, and Madam's parrot took themselves off to the secluded respectability of the third floor. Madam's son, an impudent product of the New York streets, reigned from her vacated throne. The waiters were still soiled but no longer respectful. And while some of the burghers of the neighborhood continued to bring their wives to dine at Strepponi's, they made it a point to depart

before nine. Of course when their wives were not with them—well, that is a different story. A man must have his fling once in a while.

At nine, nowadays, the front door of Strepponi's is locked. After nine only individuals known to Madam's son may enter. He has, it is true, a wide acquaintance. In they troop!—the girls, free of gesture, roving of eye, loud of laughter; the men—all sorts of men from the heavy-jowled political leader of the district ("I hold this district in the holler of my hand, see!") to the consumptive clerk fleeing the loneliness of his hall bedroom for the rosy glare of Strepponi's.

And after nine o'clock nearly everybody knows everybody else—that is what gives the place its curious individuality. It is a club. It is a gathering place for the freer spirits of that small section of New York. The girls cry, "Hello, dearie!" to one another and exchange the gossip of their trade. The men buy one another drinks. At times, toward midnight, there are brawls over a girl or a question of ethics. But at the next meeting at Strepponi's even the brawlers seem to be friends again. Disagreements are forgotten; good fellowship triumphs.

And Dick Munson journeyed to Strepponi's two or three times a month and viewed its turbulent comedies through eyes philosophical from good Scotch whiskey. He was strictly an observer—so he felt. He gazed upon the scene as one might gaze upon a play, a play with no particular plot. He was proud of his detachment.

In time, Strepponi's also regarded him with a certain amount of detachment.

At first they could not understand why he stayed so late or, rather, why, staying, he did not join the revels. After all, it was no way for a man to act—to sit at a table, alone, guzzling, while watching the others with a gaze that was sometimes satiric and sometimes blank. For Strepponi's—even after nine o'clock—has its code. But, in time, they became used to him. They regarded with indifference his fresh-colored blond good looks, the evident prosperity of his attire, his white teeth, the careless, graceful slouch of his strong shoulders.

That is, all except Gracie.

Indeed, Gracie annoyed Dick Munson. She wouldn't leave him entirely alone in the detachment which he desired and took pride in. Certainly, he didn't want to get involved with any of these girls who made Strepponi's their headquarters, their hunting-ground, rendezvous.

Often, Dick Munson, looking up, would find Gracie's eyes upon him. While she was the very center of attraction at a table, when she was bubbling over with high spirits, he noticed that, sometimes, she would suddenly fall silent to gaze at him morosely, inquiringly.

He didn't like it. It embarrassed, it worried him.

Occasionally, she would drop into the chair opposite his own.

"Why don't you join us?"

"I'd rather not."

"Do you like me to sit here with you?"

"I'm poor company for you."

"I don't mind if you don't."

"I don't really mind—but you're wasting your time."

"It's my time, isn't it?"

But, after a while, she would fling herself off, disappointed, disgruntled at his lack of response. But what did she expect? For months, she had seen him come into Strepponi's alone, remain alone at his own small table in the corner. Couldn't she see that he was different from the other men who came to Strepponi's?

Yet, in a way, he admired the girl.

Hers was the most vivid personality in Strepponi's. And it was evident that Gracie was accustomed to having her way with men—at least, the men who came to Strepponi's. Dick Munson noticed that she had her choice of these men. The other girls, jealous as they might be, never seemed to dispute a man with Gracie.

For Gracie was pretty, really pretty. Dick Munson felt that no matter where she appeared her prettiness would have been acknowledged. In Strepponi's it was emphasized. Her short blonde hair fell in thick straight masses around her piquant face with its pointed chin. Her soft round cheeks did not need the film of rouge with which they were brushed. There was, somehow, that air of bruised fragility about her that is very appealing.

Then, one night, Dick Munson made a mistake. He made the mistake of calling Gracie over to him.

He had been drinking more than usual. His head was filled with thoughts that seemed to him both profound and beautiful. He wanted to tell someone his thoughts before they evaporated—his beautiful, profound and important thoughts. So he called Gracie over to him.

She came at once. She had been sitting with two other girls and three men who were lavish with their money. Nevertheless, when Dick Munson beckoned, she rose at once and fluttered over to him.

"Sit down," said Dick Munson. "Have a drink."

She sat down and smiled at him and pouted. "It's about time you paid me a little attention."

She laid her hand over his, caressing his fingers with her fingers. But he brushed her hand aside.

"Don't!" he said.

For a moment she was rebuffed but, recovering, she brought into play another of the arts with which she charmed men. "Have you heard that story about the woman who sent her little boy—" she began.

"Oh, don't!" he said, with a gesture.

She drew back in her chair, slouched down. "Well, you asked me to come over here," she said presently, and sullenly.

"Yes, but . . . I had something to tell you."

"What?"

"I've forgotten," he said vaguely and, indeed, all his profound and beautiful thoughts had vanished or, perhaps, had sunk deep into his consciousness again.

"What's the matter with you?" Gracie demanded angrily. "You call me over and then you act like this. Why do you keep yourself to yourself so much anyway? I guess you think you're a whole lot better than the rest of us here, don't you?"

"Oh, no!" he said earnestly.

"What is it then?"

"I don't know. After I've had a few drinks, my own thoughts keep me company, I suppose. They're amusing enough then."

"Yeh, I guess maybe they are. Well, what do you think of us?"

"Children."

"Children?"

"Yes, children. You're just like children—all of you. Those stories you tell—why, they're just like the things little boys scribble on walls. Childish!"

"Oh, yes! I know! I've met your kind before. You want to preach. You want to have a good time yourself and after you've had a good time you make yourself feel better by telling us how rotten we are."

"Oh, no! You don't understand. I don't want to preach—I hope you'll always remain children."

"Why?"

"Because if you stop being children you'll begin to think—and if you begin to think you won't be happy any longer."

"I suppose you think a lot!"

"Too much."

She looked at her hand for a moment—the hand he had thrust from him.

"I guess we all do a little thinking at times," she murmured.

He leaned toward her. "Don't—don't think!"

She lifted her eyes to his and they were perplexed eyes now, doubtful, questioning.

"Maybe it's the one way to start people thinking—telling them not to think," she said.

He shook his head at her solemnly.

"No, don't think!"

"Well, one thing I think is that you're a nut," she said. "You're like the old Madam's parrot. He'd learn one thing to say and then he'd keep saying it over and over again. . . . Let's have another drink."

The waiter brought Scotch and ginger ale for him, straight gin for Gracie.

"I can't explain what I mean," he said presently, and drew his hand across his eyes, but within him there was a stirring again of his profound and beautiful thoughts. "It's like this: It has something to do with freedom—the freedom of the soul. Yes, that's it! You see, if we could all do what we want to do, what we were meant to do naturally, we'd be happy. But we have to do such mean things, such vicious things. You do. I do. It's as if we were caught in some machinery that we didn't make . . . the making of which we had nothing to do with . . . knew nothing about. But there we are. Caught! And we can't get out. And when we start thinking about it, it makes us unhappy, frightfully unhappy. Yes, that's what I meant to say. Of course, if we were strong enough, brave enough, we might free ourselves. We might have a life that was splendid, glorious—as if we could tear ourselves away from earth and go flying on. . . . gloriously!"—again he brushed his hand across his eyes—"No, I can't explain."

She had been listening to him, uncomprehending, catching a word here and there.

"Say, what's your name?" she asked.

He hesitated.

"Oh, tell me any name," she said impatiently. "Just give me a handle to call you by."

"It's Dick—Dick Munson."

"Well, listen, Dick—"

"Dick Munson's really my name."

"Yeh! Well, that's all right. Listen! I've had a pretty good education"—his remark about children still rankled—"I graduated from grammar school. Honest! I read good books—books by Dickens and Scott and writers like that. Classical books. Honest! I can't stand this cheap stuff they put out nowadays. But—well, life's pretty dull unless you kick a little excitement into it. I just couldn't stand getting up every morning at the same time, going to work every day at the same time, coming home at the same time—everything, everything, at the same time! It got me. Was that what you meant by being caught up in the machinery? Well, this is a little freer, isn't it? The bunch here don't know what I'm like—not really. They don't know I'm educated and like highbrow books. But they're good sports. I like 'em. They're fine to bum around with. And they leave you alone in a way. I mean they don't say things like you do—crazy things that upset you. . . ."

She stopped for she saw that his head had fallen forward and he was nodding. He had heard little or nothing of what she had said. She seized the sleeve of his coat and shook it vigorously. "Say, wake up!"—and when he looked at her with glazed eyes—"Say, you'd better go home"—she hesitated, and then asked awkwardly, "Do you want me to take you home?"

But Dick Munson pulled himself together. He rose and struggled with his overcoat, and then stood swaying a little.

"No, I can get home by myself," he said, "I'm all right. No! I don't want you to take me home."

"Oh, don't get crabby about it," Gracie said defiantly, "I didn't really think you wanted me to."

## II

It was some time before Dick Munson went to Strepponi's again. He had certainly allowed himself to drink too much that last night.

"Look here! I'll have to pull myself together!" he said to himself.

He had no intention of letting himself slip over the edge into the abyss no matter how flat life might seem at times. Besides, he felt that he had made rather an ass of himself with that girl. What sort of drivel had he talked to her. He couldn't remember it clearly. Not all of it.

But as the weeks passed his memories of that night became less accusing. After all, Strepponi's was an amusing sort of place. One evening, when he had nothing else to do, he hopped into a taxicab and drove there.

Gracie, he noted, was also there. She was sitting with a man with whom she seemed to be on fairly intimate terms—a fat man with red hands and a bullet head. Dick Munson was careful to avoid glancing directly at her but he was little more than seated when she came over to him. Again she seated herself in the vacant chair opposite his own.

"Hello, Dick!" she said, with a little sullenness.

"Hello, Gracie!"

"You've been away an awfully long time."

"Yes."

"I—I suppose you had things to take up your time?"

"Yes."

"Maybe you thought you drank too much that last night you were here?"

"Yes, I did, didn't I? What in the world did I say to you? I must have talked like a fool!"

"Oh, don't say that!" she said quickly.

They were silent for a little while. Dick Munson was conscious that Gracie seemed to be studying him with an expression that held a little desperation in it. Presently, with an effort, she began again.

"I've been looking for you—nearly every night. I've got something—something I want to tell you."

He smiled at her. She looked unusually pretty tonight. She was flushed. Perhaps it was the sense of desperation

that seemed, vaguely, to animate her.

"What is it?" he asked.

"It's something I wanted to get your advice about"—he saw that she was watching him even more closely, even more eagerly—"You see that man over there?"

"The man you were sitting with?"

"Yes. Well. . . . he wants me to marry him."

"He does!"

"Oh, well, you needn't act so surprised about it. Although maybe I ought to feel flattered that anybody wants to marry me. That's what you're thinking. And he's pretty comfortable"—she went on, not without a touch of pride—"He owns a paint store in Sixth Avenue. Simmons's. Maybe you've seen it—a nice, clean, prosperous store, too. But . . . well, I wanted to ask you what you thought about it first."

"You wanted to ask me!" he exclaimed, with a little gasp of amazement.

"Yes."

"What do you think about it?"

"Well . . . wouldn't it be going back to just what I had before? You see, I'd have to get up every morning at the same time to get his breakfast, get his lunch every day at the same time—he likes to come home to lunch, he says—get his dinner every night at the same time—everything at the same time. Wouldn't it be just like what I had before?"—abruptly she shuddered—"and all the time—*him!*"

She shrugged her shoulders and then as Dick Munson gazed at her, he saw her face suddenly change. Suddenly, it lost its prettiness. It was distorted. Her lips quivered, twisted themselves out of shape. Her eyes were agonized. And, suddenly, she cried aloud, "Oh, what's the matter with you? You don't understand! You won't understand!" and she dropped her head in her hands and sobbed blowsily, wailingly.

Dick Munson now was swept with amazement, confusion. But he did not have any time to devote to his own muddled state. For the fat man with

whom Gracie had been sitting when he had entered burst upon them.

"Say, what's the meaning of this!" he bellowed. "What did you say to her, you damn bastard!"

All this seemed to happen in the same minute and during that minute Dick Munson rose and hit straight at the fat man's eyes. He wasn't going to be called a damn bastard. Not by these rotters! The fat man yelped with pain. But he had courage. He threw himself on Dick Munson. Madam Streponi's son tossed himself on the two of them as they struggled, staggering around the room. A table was overturned. And some one—probably an adherent of the fat man's threw a plate which hit Dick Munson on the forehead. He felt the warm trickle of blood running down into his eyes.

Then Gracie seemed to be in their midst—Gracie, scratching, kicking, smashing a glass in the face of Madam Streponi's son, biting the fat man's fingers as they clutched Dick's throat.

And then they were in the street outside Streponi's with a pale moon overhead and a frozen scrunch of blackened snow beneath their feet—beneath Dick Munson's feet. For Gracie was in Dick Munson's arms, relaxed, a bundle.

"Phew!" he said. "You fainted! Or I guess maybe a blow from that pig, aimed at me, got you. We'll have to beat it! Where shall we go?"

"To my place. Put me down. I'm all right now."

He turned her in his arms, set her upright on the pavement. She seized his hand. They ran.

But at the end of a block she stopped abruptly. Dick Munson saw that she was laughing. She looked incredibly happy. Her breath made little white puffs in the chill air.

"We're crazy!" she exclaimed. "What are we running for? They won't care. They're used to fights at Streponi's. I've seen lots worse than that one!"—and then with a glance at him

—"But your hat! Your coat! and your face all blood!"

Dick Munson was suddenly aware of himself. He emerged from the excitement of the past few minutes.

"I'll go home," he said.

Gracie laid her hand upon his arm. "No! Come with me. You can wash up, fix yourself. It's just around the corner and I'll give you a drink of good Scotch that'll put you on your feet."

He hesitated.

"Oh, come on! Are you afraid of me?" she asked angrily.

They arrived in front of the house in which she lived—an ordinary flathouse with a blank, brownstone facade. She fished in her pocket, secured a key, opened the front door.

"Quiet now!" she whispered, "It's early yet."

In semi-darkness they ascended interminable stairs.

At last another door, another key. Gracie unlocked the door, threw it open, pushed him in ahead of her. And all the time he was a little afraid of her, something kept him protesting . . . but he didn't want her to know that he was afraid.

"Wait! Here's the light."

She pulled on the light and led him to the bathroom. "Make yourself at home. There some witch-hazel on that shelf. It'll be good for that cut."

She closed the door upon him.

He did not know himself when he gazed into the mirror over the wash-basin. The cut looked nasty but, really, it was only a scratch. He bathed it painstakingly with the witch-hazel. He washed his hands and face in tepid-water—painstakingly, too, with slow, reflective movements. He looked better, felt better. He must go now.

He went in search of Gracie and found her on the couch in the small living-room, her legs curled up under her. He felt awkward, embarrassed.

"I'll go now. . . ."

"No! Sit down. Just one drink. It's there." She pointed to the table on which there was a bottle of Scotch, a

glass, a small pitcher filled with water.

He helped himself to a small measure of whiskey, poured water into it, sat in the chair opposite her.

She waited a moment, breathless, and then leaned forward intent. "Ever since that night, I've been thinking of you—wanting to see you again—wanting to talk to you. I'm not a child any more. Honest!"

He lifted his eyes with difficulty to hers. "Well?"

"I'm willing to do anything you want me to do."

He frowned. He did not understand. "But—I don't want you to do anything."

"Yes! Yes, you started me. You started me thinking. It's all right. I know there's something different than this, better than this but—I don't know what it is. You've got to tell me."

He shook his head. "I don't know. that's the point! What I said was that there must be something better—but I don't know what it is."

"Yes! Yes!"—her voice was eager now, expectant. It was something like a child's voice. It held the quaver of a child's voice when the child asks some question that seems immensely important in its small existence. "You can teach me. You know. You knew enough to see that we were all children. I want to grow up now. Honest! But I don't know how. You've got to help me!"

"I?" He laughed.

"Yes, you! You know the secret."

"I don't know."

"Yes! I can see it's all silly—the way we live. It don't mean anything—the way they act at Strepponi's—the way I act. And the other way—just getting up the same time every day, going to work at the same time, getting home at the same time—that's silly, too. That's just like being a machine, isn't it? That's what you said. And I know there's something else but I don't know what it is."

"What do you want me to tell you? What do you want me to do?"

"Teach me! Maybe you could take

me away somewhere and teach me. Maybe it would take time. But I'd learn. I'm willing. I'm willing to do anything you say—"

"But I'm as much in the dark as you are. I don't know what you want me to do."

"I want you to help me."

"But anything I could do—well, it wouldn't be very different from what any of those men at Strepponi's could do for you, what that man who wants to marry you could do for you."

"You're different."

"But what do you want of me?" he repeated.

"I don't know. It's like as if I wanted you to read poetry to me. But it isn't that. That's as near as I can come to telling you what I want you to do for me."

"I can't do it."

"Yes! Yes, you can!"—her hand touched her breast—"I know you can."

He rose. "No! It's impossible. What you ask is impossible. I didn't mean to start this. I'm sorry. I was drunk that night. I shouldn't have spoken to you, involved you in this way. I'm sorry."

"You can help me if you want to. There's something that isn't like this, like Strepponi's, and it isn't dull like dish-water like it was before I went to Strepponi's. You know what it is."

"I don't know!" he shouted. For he was exasperated now and he was remorseful and her reiterations were pitiful to him. They reproached him. They beat upon him cruelly. And he didn't want to hear them. He wanted to get away. He didn't know what he could do for her. At least, the only thing he could do for her was to give himself to her, give himself entirely to her and to her reincarnation. But he couldn't do that. No, he couldn't! Not one man in a hundred would do that for her. She asked too much of him.

His stubborn expression, his unyielding attitude, frightened her. He could see fright take possession of her. And it alarmed and hurt him.

"You can't leave me now!" she cried,

"Not without telling me. You've got to help me."

"I—I can't! I don't know what you mean. I don't know what you want."

He took a step toward the door but, leaning forward quickly, she caught him. Her arms caught him. They locked themselves around his knees.

"Don't go! You can't go now. You started me. You can't leave me this way. You've got to help me!"

"No! No, I can't!"

Retreating, he dragged her from the couch. Retreating, he pulled her across the room on her knees. The dead weight of her body trying to hold him back, forced to move forward, heavily, inch by inch, was horrible to him.

She was still protesting. Sobbing. But her words were muffled to him now. He did not hear them. He had set himself against hearing them. He reached the door. He pulled it open. Stooping, he managed to free himself from the clutch of her locked fingers. He sprang through the door. He heard the thump of her body as it fell flat behind the closed door. But he was outside. He was free of her. He had himself to himself again.

### III

It was a very long time indeed before Dick Munson went to Strepponi's again. Weeks passed and months.

But one night he passed the place. He felt badly in need of a drink. And he was curious . . . He turned and went in.

They were amiable enough in their welcome of him. Madam Strepponi's son laughed and said that he had saved Dick Munson's hat and overcoat for him. After all, brawls at Strepponi's were soon forgiven, soon forgotten.

Dick Munson sat at his table in the corner and ordered Scotch and ginger ale.

Then, after a second Scotch and ginger ale, Gracie came in. She was hanging upon the arm of the proprietor of the paint store. Dick Munson noticed

that her eyes came at once to his corner.

He half rose.

Gracie came to a dead stop. But she did not speak to him. She did not nod to him. But in her eyes, he saw, there was a very terrible hatred and contempt

of him and, perhaps, a very terrible despair.

And then, turning away from Dick Munson, she thrust her hand again through the fat man's arm.

"Come on! Buy me a drink, Jim!" she said loudly.



## Civilization

*By Roda Roda*

**W**HAT is the first thing you do in the morning:

"I pray," says the Arab.

"I wash myself," says the Englishman.

"I breakfast," says the German.



## Distances

*By A. Newberry Choyce*

**H**OW long since Cæsar sailed from Gaul  
With eagles on his ships;  
Yet a youth I know has the date and all  
At his finger tips.

Planets travel swift and far,  
Yet I know a man  
Can track the farthest outward star  
Almost to a span.

You are so close, I see your face  
In an unbroken line;  
But ah! the immeasurable space  
Between your heart and mine!



# Before the Music Lesson

*By Helen Woljeska*

**L**OLO stood in the music-room awaiting the Signora Mauro. She did not await her with impatience. The Signora was short, squat, swarthy, and had absurd notions of her importance. Her only relieving quality was her tendency to be late. Every moment snipped off the hated music lesson was a moment of bliss for Lolo.

Contentedly she looked about her. The music-room was her favorite room. How light it was with its four wide, lace-shrouded windows! How magnificent it was with its inlaid furniture upholstered in deep green velvet! And how delightfully it smelled with its elaborate flower table crowded to overflowing with hyacinths of all lovely shades! On the wall hung a riotous "Blinde-Kuh-Spiel" by Makart. In the graceful white porcelain stove a gentle wood fire crackled. Only the Bluethner grand, open for action with "Schule der Gelauefigkeit" in odious prominence, marred the harmony.

To shut out this vision Lolo turned to one of the windows, parted the curtains, and pressed her face against the pane. It was spring in Vienna. Swallows darted past the window. The sky was so clear, so high, so blue. The chestnut trees had put out their first transparent green. And golden sunbeams clustered around the gray walls of the English embassy opposite.

Lolo looked, without seeing. Subconsciously she took in the scene, the whole gaily delicate atmosphere. Colors, sounds, perfumes filled her with vague delight, to which a strange un-

rest was subtly added. Then suddenly reasoning and critical faculties returned into their own.

Two young women had appeared in the embassy garden and were now entering the tennis court. It was easy to see that they were foreigners. No Viennese could look like that! Lolo felt a revulsion as she scanned their corsetless figures, low, flat busts, wide waists, large, heelless white shoes. Then, outraged, she turned her eager, beauty-hungry eyes toward the street. It was a quiet side street, little frequented. Yet she did not have to wait long before a typical Wienerin came along, radiant in all the witcheries approved of by fashion . . . and the fashion of the late eighties meant tiny waists, high swelling bosoms, beautifully curved bustles. Ah! From the high, pointed hat to the tips of her delicately shaped button shoes she was perfect, that Wienerin down there!

Lolo heaved a deep sigh of approval. When she grew up she also would look like that. She also would have such a wonderful, soft, swelling bosom, she also would swing gracefully in widely curved hips, she also would, in crossing the street, display such charmingly slender legs among rustling ruffles of lace and silk. She would be even more beautiful than that young woman down there. She would be extraordinary! And people would look after her and say: "There she goes, the beautiful Lolo! The famous actress—(or artist—or pianist . . . no, not pianist—poetess). The beauty of Vienna!"

Wisely she nodded to herself, as

she looked into her future. Yes. She would be a famous beauty. All the *jeunesse dorée* would worship her. Lolo loved the term *jeunesse dorée*. It conjured up a confused, thrilling vision of many handsome young men, some in evening clothes and some in uniforms, but all of them pale, black-haired, with dark, dark, melancholy eyes and red, red, ironic mouths. And they all would worship the white and gold Lolo! Ah! Life would be luscious and colorful like a painting by Makart!

Lolo brooded. She wondered how long it must last before that glorious time would begin. And then—then—before it must end again. . . . Ah! Rapturous things like this should never, never end! Still they do. . . . Lolo would grow old. . . . Of course she would grow old beautifully, like a queen. Still, she would grow old. And the *jeunesse dorée* only worships the young, or the full-blown. It would worship others. It would pass her by. She would be left alone—alone—alone— It would be ghastly. . . . How could she ever bear it? She could not bear it! Lolo clenched her little fists.

Then a light broke upon her. She must commit suicide. That was it! Beautiful and tragic! She would

commit suicide at the height of life. She would shoot herself—in the heart. Her face would be as perfect as ever. But her beautiful, swelling bosom would be shot to pieces, mangled, bleeding. . . . Ah! How the *jeunesse dorée* would weep at her coffin, at her white and gold catafalque! There would be high, flaming candles, and hundreds and hundreds of roses, and deep, wailing music, an all those young men, kneeling and weeping and mourning for her. . . .

And she? Would she know it?

Where would she be?

Would she be anywhere?

In spite of the spring sunshine, the swallows and hyacinths, a shudder of cold fear went through Lolo. Ah! Where would she be? A tiny, terrified little ghost facing the black depths of eternity . . . alone, alone, alone!

Then Lolo threw back her head. She smiled defiantly. Perhaps, after all, that would not be so terrible! A mystic spirit of adventure steeled her to defiance.

The door opened and Johann ushered in the Signora Mauro.

With an old little smile Lolo told herself that there were things worse than being alone—alone—alone. . . .



**P**ITIFUL is the girl who is making the pretense of being good. Laughable is the one who is making the pretense of being bad.



**K**ISSING is evidently a branch of athletics. Some women are in it for the sport and some for the money.



**A** WOMAN doesn't want something to think about. She wants something to think over.



# The Higher Learning in America

XV

## The University of Wisconsin

*By Paul Gangelin*

### I

**W**ISCONSIN'S campus has all the conventional adornments—the elms, the ivy, and the well-groomed lawns—but in addition to these it has a hill—the Hill. We use “campus” only in the abstract—the concretion is “the Hill.” Thus, to illustrate, we might and do say, “He’s a big man on the campus,” but we invariably say, “Who’s the keen woman you walked up the Hill with to your ten o’clock?” The university buildings are grouped on and around the Hill. Some of them, like Chadbourne and Bascom Halls and the Library, are beautiful and satisfying to the eye, but for the most part they must have been conceived in the nightmares of State architects who began their careers as plumbers. I point especially to the baffled struggles of the Law Building toward realizing the Victorian ideal of what the Byzantine should have been if it wasn’t; to the abominable Sterling Hall, done in the most advanced hygienic factory *genre*, even in the detail of trick fresh-air windows; and to that unhappy bastard of local talent and correspondence school architecture, the Chemistry Building. However, nature triumphs over blue-prints, and the Hill is lovely in the mood of each season. Behind it lesser hills roll along the shore of Lake Mendota into the unexplored and apparently limitless hinterland of the Ag campus and the university farms.

On three sides the Hill is surrounded

by Madison, the capital of Wisconsin, a picturesque middle-size city squeezed into distortion by its famous four lakes. State Street, a mile of small shops, lunchrooms, drug stores, and dinky street-cars, links the university with the authors of its being who sit in the Capitol. On the fourth side of the Hill, hardly farther from Bascom Hall than one can flip a cigarette butt, lies Lake Mendota.

### II

WISCONSIN is a paradise of the co-ed, for which Mendota must answer. Its gifts to co-education are infinitely various—nights of idle drifting in a canoe, to the accompaniment of low-voiced talk, the glow of cigarettes, the not unpleasant blah of a distant saxophone, the subdued yells of wassail in Lake Street; spring afternoons active with what is known to city councils as “mixed bathing,” myriads of heads and naked young limbs gathered together in barbaric bathing-suits on the fraternity piers; winter twilights of skating; ice-boating, the intoxication of untamed speed; on Lakeshore Drive scores of fussers can be frankly fond of each other, of an evening, in a setting which makes the conventional “Lovers’ Lane” look like a back alley.

Supported by such an ally as Mendota, the co-ed has proved irresistible. We have, of course, our fair share of young women who wear common-sense shoes and who major in mathematics, but the lake and the university have

attracted a type of girl that is calculated to make the male half of the school neglect the arduous cultivation of its parts for the essentially more important business of making itself agreeable to a woman or women.

The effect of co-education is tremendous. We concentrate our best efforts on "fussing," everywhere it is male and female—up and down the Hill in the morning, on and around the lake, in the drug stores and cafeterias, at the movies. Week-ends bristle with parties; between week-ends there are all sorts of things to do—rare is the strong-minded youth who can strike a just balance between his work and the insistent call of pleasure.

In the class-room, the young lady in the next chair is much more likely to command attention than is a tedious instructor, and a mixed class subtly but grimly clings to its sex-consciousness. While I have known no honest instructor who made concessions to tabus when it was necessary to disregard them, witness the pernicious effect, for instance, as exemplified by my *Hamlet*, which was purged of Ophelia's songs: the fact that they made her madness horrible and pitiful and genuine did not matter—the tabu must have first consideration. Even in the study of law the presence of the *jeune fille* tones the proceedings down to the conventions of the parlor. I have in mind a classic instance in a course in criminal law in which men hesitated to state the details of a rape case because there was present a girl, who was also a student and who, in the nature of things, had read the case the night before.

However, these objections are but half-objections—I am the last to wish for Wisconsin anything but its present system of co-education. Because economic necessity does not drive them to regarding a university as a trade school, the women quicken its intellectual life; as a group, they are better students than the men, more highly sophisticated, and more susceptible to ideas. Despite occasional alarms in the news-

papers and the fire-and-brimstone sermons of the Dean of Women, the co-ed of Wisconsin is a remarkably well-behaved young lady. We have our "broad-minded" girls, but they are rare.

### III

THE democratic test is applied to scholarship standards, and therefore they are low—not lower than standards of other State universities, but lower than they should be. The resentful faculty is constantly edging up and boosting them a little, but a faculty alone cannot accomplish much, for the University is the creature of the jealous tax-payers, created by them to give their sons and daughters an education, or, if they be incapable of education, at least the prestige of an A. B. degree. Since most of the children whose parents send them forth in quest of higher learning in these days are either lazy or fundamentally unfit for mature tasks and mature responsibilities in dealing with ideas, it follows that any sternly discriminating test would deprive a large number of tax-payers' offspring of their divine right; ergo, to maintain high scholastic standards is to encourage an "aristocracy of the intellect"—I quote from an up-State editor. It happened last year that a certain professor provoked open rebellion because of the rigid exactments of his course, accounting. The aforementioned editor, together with others, saw immediately that democracy was in danger, and he rode his typewriter into the fray, whooping that it was a conspiracy to deprive the children of the common people of their inalienable right to have an A. B. after their names whether they had worked for it or not. There was much to-da, but it was a false alarm. The course, as I have pointed out, was one in accounting, and the only motive of the instructor was to turn out more efficient office help, in which purpose even professional snoopers could find nothing unconstitutional.

It is impossible for a State university

to graduate classes of cultured and intelligent students, for culture and intelligence, in the larger sense, have no immediate practical value, and it is constantly necessary for the State university to justify its existence in the eyes of the State by pointing to its practical accomplishments, its illuminating "short-horn" course in agriculture, its engineers, chemists, home economists, and bookkeepers. And the practical young Americans who attend Wisconsin want to learn practical things—if they want to learn anything. They look every subject that is offered sternly in the face and ask, "What good will you do me?"—meaning, "Will you help me to make money?"

As in most co-educational universities, the courses that are designed merely to cultivate the understanding are neglected by the men and swamped by the women.

On the surface, it is a discouraging prospect—a great university dedicated to the proposition that all men must be taught to make money and that the measure of its importance is the number of machine-made half-educations that it doles out per annum. But as the sport writer so frequently says, the score does not indicate how fiercely the battle is fought. Wisconsin's reputation for encouraging intellectual honesty in its faculty—a reputation which it deserves to have so far as any institution may claim a reputation for fearlessness—has developed and attracted an important odd-lot of men in various departments who are a constant stimulus in the interest of something higher than the keeping of books or the feeding of pigs, and many an inarticulate seeker after knowledge is reclaimed from the purely vegetable state. Unfortunately a low scale of salaries and stiff seniority rules succeed in driving away most of the best men—even if the administration should recognize the worth of an instructor (which is by no means to be taken for granted), the legislature cannot be persuaded that teaching is not its own reward, and we see almost each year the desertion of

someone or other to more appreciative or plutocratic colleges.

So strong is Wisconsin's tradition of freedom to think that William Jennings Bryan has sniffed it out and counts it as one of his pet phobias. In his discourse on "Brother or Brute," Mr. Bryan never fails to make the front page of Mid-West newspapers by the simple dodge of accusing President Birge of heresy because he introduces the youth of the university to the new-fangled notions of the indiscreet Mr. Darwin. It is of course the highest nonsense to suppose that the notions of Darwin or of anyone else could make an impression on the contented minds of the engineers, agriculturists, commerce students, and home economists who learn their trade at Wisconsin.

The liberal tradition, which undeniably exists, was first conspicuously articulated by the Regents in 1896 when they were forced to defend Dr. Richard T. Ely against charges of what was then deemed unbecoming radicalism. "Whatever may be the limitations which trammel inquiry elsewhere, we believe the great State of Wisconsin should encourage that continual fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone truth can be found." So spake the Regents in 1896; years later some meddlesome youth discovered their rash words in the dusty archives of the past, and the current senior class caused a fearful embarrassment by insisting that they be graven in bronze and nailed where everyone could see them. For years after that the tablet which bore them was relegated to an inauspicious place in the rear of Bascom Hall. Now it gleams proudly on the bosom of that building, and yet, contrary to expectation, the earth hasn't opened to swallow it.

The result of this expression has brought some tribulation for Wisconsin, but it has also done much good. It has kept us from succumbing to patent-leather hair and threshing machines and has served as a stout buckler for the work and development of many good men.

Last year the Hon., if muddled, Calvin Coolidge gave to the world the surprising information that Wisconsin is a nest of radicalism. If Our Cal could only have heard us boo Kate O'Hare, if he could have seen President Birge running around in circles while he tried to justify his refusal to let speakers slightly tinged with radicalism use university buildings! No, we struggle, but we are not radical. Poor President Birge! Between the powerful La Follette progressives and the reactionaries he has to juggle the university, and if he allows it to fall on either side, the appropriation drops like a plummet.

The faculty in general is safe enough. Its attitude is best reflected by a young lady instructor in English with whom I remonstrated that it was not the business of the university to abet the enforcement of the Eighteenth Amendment, whereat she asked, "What is the purpose of a university if not to teach respect for the laws of the country?" I couldn't say.

#### IV

WISCONSIN is singularly cut off from its own past. There are no senior sings, no hallowed fences or steps, no night-watches over sacred symbols of the University's honor. There has never appeared a *sacer vatus* to preserve for younger generations the deeds of the big men of the older.

We have lost almost entirely the distinctive flavors of college life and each year we grow nearer to the standardization and colorlessness that is dear to the middle-aged, but I am thankful that we have held fast to the custom of serenading. Nothing, it would seem, could be further from the Anglo-Saxon self-consciousness of the young men of a prosaic tradition than to brave public scorn by twanging banjos and singing of love underneath their ladies' balconies, yet we do it. Any soft spring night in Sorority Alley, a narrow court in which a number of sorority houses are grouped, you can find, half-con-

cealed by the black shadows, orchestras or quartets or a soulful solist delighting the ear of the co-ed who hovers, presumably in negligee, behind discreetly darkened windows. It was the custom to applaud these serenades, but the Dean of Women recently condemned this as unchaste, so that now it is *verboten*.

The best serenades are those in Lake Street, where the fraternity houses crowd one upon the other. While Lake Street is hurrying through tomorrow's assignment before going to bed a cornet sounds a resonant quaver, and all hell tears loose. Leathern lungs are strained to acclaim nocturnal music, a hundred heads pop out of a hundred windows, followed by men in bathrobes, pajamas, B. V. D.'s; then the music is such inspired jazz as only those who are willing to give up their rest for it deserve to hear.

#### V

THE University offers an opportunity for everyone to join something; besides seventy social and professional fraternities and sororities, there are untold numbers of honorary organizations. He who cannot wear some kind of dingus on his watch chain is a very poor stick indeed. The fraternities—those putative hot-beds of class distinction—are approximately as undemocratic as the Elks. Like all other American social groups they prefer to embrace men who have money, but, to do them justice, generally compatibility with the group as it exists is their only basis of judgment. In my own chapter there were five of us who supported ourselves at work that ranged from raffling pints of whiskey to tooting saxophones in cafeteria orchestras, and no one thought the less of us.

The standards of desirability vary so greatly among so many fraternities that practically everyone has a chance—the most "exclusive" insist on family, i. e., one generation of money-makers who have kept out of jail; many of them think that heaven can confer no greater

boon than a high school athlete; and the least of them ask only that the prospective brother stand still long enough to have a pledge button stuck in his lapel. Every one of them demands in its ritual high qualities vaguely phrased; the rituals are as good-naturedly neglected as is the Constitution of the United States.

There have been occasional anti-fraternity movements. The last one was captained by a couple of graduate students who filled the columns of the *Cardinal* each morning with thunderous rhetoric about democracy, snobbishness, etc. They were fighting fraternities, they said, for the good of the school—far be it from them to envy the fraternity man his narrow smugness. The next year a new fraternity established a chapter in Madison, and both these men were enrolled among its members. There are democrats for you!

It has been charged against fraternities that a genius, say Walt Whitman, could not gain admission to one. What of it? A genius does not need the sanction of an undergraduate group. There is discrimination, of course, which is painful, but a mere glance at any group of fraternity men in a State university will prove that class distinction is a hollow bogey, and what discrimination between personalities there is is not intelligent enough to be dangerous. Like everything else in our temporarily imperfect universe, fraternities are compounded of good and evil.

## VI

AMONG Wisconsin's eight undergraduate publications the *Octopus* has the widest circulation. It is, of course, a magazine of humor. Partly because of the surveillance of the Deans and partly because of the low ebb of ingenuity at Wisconsin, it lacks the salt of the best college magazines of its type. It is more closely related to the comic strip and the vaudeville stage than to anything else. The *Satire Section* of the annual *Badger* used to justify its name by satirizing fully the

whole of university life, but the eternal vigilance of the hierarchy of Deans is steadily rendering it innocuous and puerile. The *Cardinal* is an untidily made up daily of no particular distinction save for the Skyrocket column, a sort of ironical scavenger of modes and manners. The quality of its shafts varies with the intelligence and sophistication of its editor; occasionally someone with a mature and civilized sense of mockery gets hold of it. It is properly the center of university life.

The one intellectual gesture that Wisconsin makes is the *Wisconsin Literary Magazine*. The Lit has a peculiar brand of literariness all its own which has been called premature rather than immature. In its present form it was founded in 1916, assuming the place of a kind of hell diver of a magazine that periodically came to the surface and presently disappeared again into the depths. The founders were a group whose names still signify to their successors ability and accomplishment. Johan Smertenko, its leading spirit, has recently dished up Iowa for *The Nation's* "These United States." The early skippers of the Lit ran afoul of hysteria during the war, the faculty turned on the editor (Mr. Coolidge please write), and even to-day there is a taint of bolshevism ascribed to the magazine.

The tone of the Lit is foreign to the trade school tradition, and so it meets with little popular appreciation. Weak and spindly though its contents are for the most part, it offers an excellent drill field for whatever young talents may try to find themselves at Wisconsin and remarkably succeeds in maintaining a relatively high standard.

Dramatic art at Wisconsin suffers from malnutrition. There are, it is true, courses in the drama and undergraduate dramatic societies, but the former mean nothing to any but a few, and the latter mean nothing at all. The Haresfoot Club produces annually a musical comedy in which all feminine roles are taken by men; with the exception of the coaching, it is entirely

the work of undergraduates. The Shows are usually very entertaining—if the libretto is ordinarily weak, the music can be relied on to be exceedingly tuneful, and the lyrics avoid the love and dove stuff of professional musical shows and incline rather to satire. In so far as these comedies reflect the natural wit of the undergraduate, they have a distinctive and pleasant frolicsomeness. Occasionally the club slips and puts on something that is merely a poor imitation of the professionals.

Edwin Booth, the bitter rival of Haresfoot, was originally founded, I believe, with the purpose of giving Wisconsin serious drama. Of accomplishing this it has miserably failed. Now and then it forays into the field of the one-act play, but its heart is not in its work, nor is its understanding up to the mark. Two years ago it forgot itself to the extent of making a movie—which, though the boys are to be praised for their ambition, was just exactly what an amateur movie might be expected to be—an imitation of the hokum of Hollywood.

The girls have two organizations, Red Domino and Twelfth Night. While these, like the men's clubs, have very respectable talents among their members, the lack of general interest on the campus gives their laudable efforts an unmerited coloring of forced æstheticism.

The most popular plays are those given by the classes. When I admit that these are such twaddle as "Cheating Cheaters," you can understand.

Three years ago the faculty formed a dramatic organization known as the Curtain Club. Their first production, "The Importance of Being Earnest," was so good that they grew ambitious and undertook the following year to present the racy "La Chasse à l'Homme," but got cold feet and turned instead to "The Tragedy of Nan," which was splendidly done. Last year the Club tried to slip over a Wisconsin Indian epic by Professor William Ellery Leonard with disastrous results.

Any report of the theatre in Madison

must needs concern itself with trivialities; there is no strong or original movement. The narrow horizon of the trade school mind embraces everything—the theatre means the movies, Orpheum circuit vaudeville, and barnstorming companies playing the successes of three seasons before last.

## VII

It is almost impossible to obtain in Madison what has come to be known as "the real stuff," but youth will have its drink, and so each week-end quantities of unholy 'dago red, white mule, synthetic gin, corn whiskey, and low-grade alcohol are perverted to use as beverages. No longer can one take one's liquor decently and congenially over the bar at Ferdie's, Hausmann's, Pete Hammacher's, or the Silver Dollar, but one can go a few blocks south of University Avenue, and there, in the land of the beneficent bootlegger, demand of Tony (or Mrs. Tony if Tony happens to be serving a sentence) the cup that not only cheers but also yells and raises the very devil.

My generation in college has taken up the excesses of prohibition with the well-known enthusiasm of youth. An alumnus of a certain fraternity told me that in 1912 it was a rule of his chapter never to admit a drunken man into the house, and that a man who habitually drank whiskey was regarded with scorn. In my time, his fraternal descendants spent most of their evenings putting each other to bed, and a man had to be an habitual drinker of kerosene to attract any attention at all. (For that matter, it was rumored that the alcohol of which we made only slightly nauseating Tom Collinses either had been or was about to be used as embalming fluid).

In this connection I cannot refrain from awarding my first prize of a slightly used tooth-brush to Secretary Denby, the sharp gentleman who discovered after the Army-Navy game of last fall that all midshipmen are not teetotallers, and the second prize of a free membership in the W. C. T. U.

goes to those officials of the Naval Academy who whitewashed their innocent lambs. It was a feather in the cap of the blue nose—respect for the law had not broken down as was intimated. I suggest that the Anti-Saloon League create a department to be known as the Bureau for the Investigation and Whitewashing of the American College Student.

## VIII

IN the end, one must conclude that Wisconsin is a miniature of the United States of America. Knowing the university's intellectual and social levels, one knows those of the nation: enjoying the student's pleasures, one enjoys those of the Y. M. C. A. man or the movie actor, according to taste and inclination. The increasingly complex

system of discipline and regimentation inside the college reflects the backwoods Volsteadism that has made the spirit of America as monochromatic as its most natural expression, the movies.

Whatever the shortcomings of the university may be, they are inevitable because it is an American university with 100% American failings. Only childish superciliousness could be led to scorn it *in toto*, for he who goes to Wisconsin has an opportunity to extend the tentacles of his consciousness and touch a great variety of experiences; he may come a simple and retire a wise man, if he be so minded; assuming that he is worth saving at all, he should be able to say, on leaving,

"I've learned that no one possesses the secret of the truth, I've made a good friend or two, and I've had a damn good time while it lasted."



## Conflicting Emotions

*By Charles Divine*

OH, you have flung behind me  
 The songs I sang with you,  
 And each a thong to bind me  
 To all the past can do;  
 Yet maids whose hair dishevels  
 Beside a dusky lake  
 Should not permit me revels  
 And lips that tears forsake,  
 But show me moons less lowly,  
 How each is but an urn  
 Funereal and holy  
 Where memories should burn,  
 And pray that it remind me  
 Of songs of Never-More—  
 Or let their hair but blind me  
 To all that I adore!



# Fred Jameson

*By Paul Eldridge*

**A**T the age of twenty, Fred Jameson thought: Now is the time to kill myself. To drop into the perfumed arms of my beloved, like a flower torn from its stem!

At the age of thirty, Fred Jameson thought: Now is the time to kill myself. In full bloom. Before I realize how the dregs taste.

At the age of forty, Fred Jameson thought: Now is the time to kill myself. Have I not seen everything? Must I see the show over again, and be bored?

At the age of fifty, Fred Jameson thought: Now is the time to kill myself. Old age is staring me in the face. A half dozen diseases are brewing in my body.

At the age of sixty, Fred Jameson thought: Now is the time to kill myself. I am old. I am suffering with my heart, my liver, my stomach and ten minor troubles.

At the age of seventy, Fred Jameson thought: Now is the time to kill myself. I do not dare to look in the mirror. What a mass of decrepitude I have become! I am suffering with my liver, my heart, my stomach, my eyes, my chest, and fifteen minor troubles.

At the age of eighty, Fred Jameson thought: Now is the time to kill myself. What more have I to do here? My generation has long been dead and forgotten. And as for me, am I really alive? Nailed to the bed, half blind, three-quarters deaf. . . .

At the age of eighty-seven, Fred Jameson asked his doctor anxiously: "Is there no hope, no hope at all for me? I am only eighty-seven years and three months old. I know a lady who is ninety-one. And there are dozens of people who have lived till one hundred and more, even."



**T**HE tragedy of life is not that we differ so little from the animals, but that we differ so little from our fellowmen.



**A**BOHEMIAN is a man who can be equally entertaining on his nickel or your thousand.



# Americana

By Major Owen Hatteras, D. S. O.

## I

### California

FROM an article entitled "Thought Projectiles For Success, With a Success Yell," by Mrs. Alberta M. Carter, of Los Angeles:

Last summer when the pavement of an avenue near us was completed, the business men celebrated by giving a street carnival—a very popular amusement in Los Angeles. At the close of the carnival, a number of high school boys who had accommodated themselves to the seating capacity of a flat-roofed business block proceeded to relieve themselves of their surplus energy by giving voice to a class yell. The pep displayed by the yell-master was delightful to behold. It impressed me so keenly that I found myself for many days after taking the position of that young lad and imitating his motions. Here it is: Fists clenched, elbows drawn back, head and chest forward, right foot forward. The idea had gotten under the skin and just had to express itself in some dynamic manner. The third day thereafter the verbal expression came. It was a yell for Success in the following phrasing:

"I AM SUCCESS!"—(push out fists with each word).

"I AM SUCCESS!"—(push out fists with each word).

"I AM SUCCESS!"—(push out fists with each word).

"I AM SUCCESS!"—(push out fists with each word).

"S-U-C-C-E-S-S!"—(push out fists with each letter).

"SUCCESS!"—(leap up and grab Success from the ether).

"SUCCESS!!!"

## II

### Kentucky

From an Associated Press dispatch from Newport, Ky., in the newspapers of January 15 last:

When Prohibition agents made a raid at 312 East Second street, in this city, they announced today, a 12-year-old girl and three smaller children were found operating a moonshine still.

## III

### Massachusetts

From the March issue of the *Nautilus*, of Holyoke, Mass.:

Here is a healing treatment. Use it twenty times every morning, and again twenty times at night just before you go to sleep. And use it whenever you *happen* to think about not feeling well, any time during the day:

*God's love heals me NOW: every day, in every way, I realise it better and better. Glory to God in the highest, Peace on earth and Good Will to all. I am now healthy, prosperous, strong and happily active in all my work.*

Take a piece of string and tie twenty knots in it, as Coué directs, then sit or lie with that in your hand; close your eyes and whisper, or talk the treatment in a low monotonous tone of voice, moving your fingers from one knot to the next as you repeat the treatment; until you have done it twenty times. *If you happen to fall asleep while you are doing it, so much the better.*

## IV

### Minnesota

Specimen of patriotic dramatic criticism from a leading article in the *Minneapolis Journal* of February 18 last:

The average American . . . will get from a well-staged, well-acted, well-spoken play of Shakespeare more thrill, more satisfaction, than he will from anything else.

## V

### New York

From an article by Franklin H. Gid-

dings, A. B., A. M., Ph. D., LL.D., Professor of Sociology and the History of Civilization in Columbia University, member of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, of the American Economic Association, of the Institute International de Sociologie, and of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, in the *Independent and Weekly Review* for March 3, page 154, column 2 (Vol. CX, No. 3837):

Who says our miners are behind in culture? Didn't they have their check-off system long before Broadway ever heard of Chekhov?

## VI

*Pennsylvania*

From an article by Reginald Wright Kauffman in No. 3009 of the estimable *Nation*.

"Where," inquired a French friend of mine, "is Independence Hall?"

And a native Philadelphian answered: "Downtown, near the Curtis Publishing Company Building."

## VII

*Texas*

From an Austin, Tex., dispatch in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* of February 20 last:

Representatives Frank Coffee and J. M. Moore of the House of Representatives of the Texas Legislature introduced a resolution in the House today, inviting "Paderewski, a Russian singer, noted for his wonderful baritone voice," to appear before the House of Representatives upon the event of his coming visit to Austin. One hundred and twenty-three Representatives believed he was, for they voted unanimously that he be invited.

## VIII

*Utah*

From a Salt Lake City dispatch in the newspapers of February 21 last:

Three prominent Salt Lake citizens were placed under arrest by deputy sheriffs in a downtown restaurant during the noon hour today, and a fourth man was later named in a warrant charging violation of that section of the State anti-cigarette law which prohibits smoking in public places. Ernest Bamberger, Republican National Committeeman for Utah and unsuccessful Republican candidate for United States Senator at the last November election; Edgar Newhouse, official of the American Smelting and Refining Company, and John C. Lynch, local capitalist, were the men arrested in the cafe. Later a warrant was issued for A. N. McKay, general manager of a Salt Lake newspaper. Bamberger, Lynch and Newhouse were having their after-dinner smoke when the officers entered. Bamberger and Lynch were smoking cigars and Newhouse had a cigarette. McKay purchased a cigar at the restaurant counter and lit it before leaving the establishment.



## Give Me a Song

By John Russell McCarthy

**G**IVE me a song that a bird might follow—  
Windy, wild, alive—  
Light as the flight of the young sea swallow  
Or the great grey pelican's dive.

Give me a song that a gull might answer  
Between the sea and the sky;  
Sing me the lyric an airy dancer  
Must swing to, though he die.



# Heloise Has a Heart

*By Margaret Widdemer*

## I

**M**RS. HARRIET JENKINSON was a lady you remembered—but not tenderly. She was ugly, she was elderly, she was bossy; her hair was black, not because it wanted to be, but because she insisted. In this lack of courage her hair was like everybody the lady came near. When you have a personality like a trombone, enormous amounts of money, and one ruling passion—your own way—those who cross your pathway must either bow or flee. Most people have some occupation which keeps them from spending too many hours exercising their self-will. Mrs. Jenkinson had not this handicap. Getting her own way was her joy, her rapture, her profession. Celebrity-collecting was her fad.

Mr. Harriet had departed this life thankfully, even hastily. The three sons had fled early in various directions. There was left to Mrs. Jenkinson only her Art, a little Mysticism, Beauty with several capitals, and the intermittent control of her daughter Heloise. They dwelt in a fabulous palace on Long Island, where as many chunks of expensive Beauty as possible had been dug from impoverished English, French and Italian homes and sewed together, so to speak, to enshrine Harriet. Harriet, for choice, wore extremely medieval clothes, jeweled girdles, also fillets above her harsh-lined elderly face, and on nights when she had imported better Swamis or Bahas than usual, jeweled sandals on her unshamed elderly feet. She bullied even the Swamis, who looked dreamily and

nobly past all this to the Ultimate Cheque. Harriet was known to have a free hand, and if she wanted her money's worth, who shall blame her?

And after all, Heloise was a disappointment.

Heloise was not especially young, (I am sorry, because she is all the heroine there is) and as plain as she could manage. She dwelt resentfully in a priceless Japanese suite with rose-colored hangings and far too full of mirrors for comfort. That is, when she dwelt in America at all. A good part of the time she drifted forlornly about Europe—forlornly as to her heart and her hats, defiant as to outward appearances.

On a particularly depressing March afternoon, Heloise, having taken with a certain perversity a small one-class boat that landed her in Canada, was making the last lap of her journey home feeling less kind to the world—which she unconsciously always visaged as conducted by her mother—than ever. The train-travel overland had been cindery, and the only satisfactory moment was when, wincing on the brink of the front door of the Long Island house, she found the cabman trying to hold out her tip, and turned on him savagely. He was being bitten on behalf of most of the things that had happened to Heloise in that house, but he could not know it, and cowered under the unexpectedness of her attack; unlooked for from a woman in a disreputable raincoat, a face of tired sallowness and a velvet hat which his wife would long since have given the ashman. Deprived by his surrender of her weapons, Heloise gave him twice what he had restored, and

plodded up the stone steps, flanked immutably by the Library Lions' grandfathers. She hated home; she always had in a casual way. Since she had broken off with Alan Trowbridge it had been an active hate.

She had given every bit of the tempestuous love nobody had wanted for twenty-eight years to Alan. That was four years gone now, but memories of him still stood out all over the terrific expensiveness of the house, like nail-points sticking up. She could even see him, as she stood between the stone lions, patting one of them on the head with a slim, paint-stained, gentleman's hand, and making some gently flippant remark about its pained expression. He'd been an artist, and poor—one of her mother's captures. A rather helpless, charming boy, with a manner of being pleasantly amused at his own helplessness. Much sweetness of nature—rather a drifter. Very good old New York family. Her mother, who had fought her way nearly to the top of New York society, had found him at some acquaintance's house and dragged him home with her, and kept her paw on him through a succession of "art evenings."

Heloise was still roped in for "art evenings" in those days, shy and overdressed, her black hair filleted by and like her mother's, trying conscientiously to like art, and the train of its exponents her mother impounded evening by evening. Alan and she, shy alike, had found each other lurking in the back-ground. She had come closer to friendship with him than with anyone for a long time, except Joan Dart, met at the Red Cross rooms in war-time and loved impulsively for her pretty face and gay, praising ways.

In those days she hadn't known or realized the lengths of management her mother would go to. Of course, Mrs. Jenkinson wanted Heloise married. She felt disgraced, having an unattractive daughter. Having bullied Heloise since childhood, she expected her now to be an untouched, easy-mannered, gay and natural girl, and was angry at the per-

son she herself had created. And Heloise, unused to the casual sweetness Alan gave everybody, had been all ready to love him for his gentleness and his friendly ways. He was a passive, gentle soul. Oh, he hadn't been to blame. What could anybody do with Harriet Jenkinson's brute force shoving from behind?

They had been engaged, then, Heloise in the seventh heaven, Alan bewildered, but making a gallant best of it (but oh, he had loved her a little, surely, surely—there were words and caresses to remember!) And they were to be married, Mrs. Jenkinson decreed, very soon. All sorts of paragraphs in the papers, all sorts of dinners about it. Heloise had a lot of money in her own right, and her mother was always proclaiming how much more she would settle on any husband. (She did it still, Heloise knew bitterly. She had heard one of the young sculptors who dined there laughing over it on the stairs to another, and the second boy saying; "That face? It would have to be five million!")

Oh, it hurt. It all hurt still. Finding Alan in Joan Dart's arms, overhearing their renunciation, Alan's helpless admission that he couldn't in honor get out of marrying Heloise, Joan's cry that even if he were free they were too poor to marry each other.

She had turned on them both with some of her mother's force. For her self-respect's sake, or some fierce self-defense far down in her, she had swept them into marriage herself, before her mother knew anything of it. Still for the salving of that fierce pride, she had financed them then and to an extent ever since. She had a hidden, bitter delight in having Joan accept (sweetly always) her bounty, and a pleasure that was not all bitter in being some help to Alan.

She loved them both still, she knew it, in spite of herself, under the hurt of what they had done to her, and how little they had really cared for her. She loved their baby, while it hurt her so to look at it that her throat tightened

when she touched it, and said the while some rough thing about its looks or ways.

But that had been a turning-point with her mother and the world. The morning she came upstairs after she had seen the Trowbridges off on their honeymoon, she had done a strange thing. She flung off her expensive, perfectly made velvet gown, jerked down her thick, lank black hair and kicked off her exquisite shoes. She slapped on instead the oldest, ugliest blouse and skirt she possessed, and shabby shoes and stockings she had been going to throw away. She snatched up the scissors and slashed them through her hair, with a last savage clip across the front to keep the fallen elf-locks out of her eyes. She made one sweep of creams and powders into the wastebasket. She crammed down on her head a velvet hat that had been wet through, that her maid had declined the reversion of. She pulled a shabby raincoat around her. And then, self-stripped of any look of female attractiveness she marched downstairs, out the door, and walked and walked and walked for six hours.

She was as strong as a horse—as strong as the lower-class grandmothers her mother camouflaged so thick with heraldry and art-hounding and money, she thought bitterly. She was scarcely tired enough to be dulled when she came home. She crossed her mother in the hall.

"My Lord, Heloise, you've bobbed your hair!" said Mrs. Jenkinson, who never talked soulfully out of hours. "Didn't anybody tell you you'd look like the devil if you did? And those clothes—"

"I want to look like the devil," said her daughter stonily. "I want to look so that after this, no matter how you try to buy men for me, they can see I'm not in on it, anyway. If I could find any worse clothes to wear I would—maybe I can. . . . Tell them to send me up something—I'm not coming down to dinner with your Yogi tonight."

That was that. Heloise stalked about

in her sloppy clothes—she was actually still in the same raincoat—and tried one thing after another to keep her from thinking. All but art; she naturally never wanted to see that again. If young sculptors laughed on the stairs about her mother's bonuses with her, at least it was patent to them or anybody that such a looking person as Heloise did not desire to attract.

## II

She was thirty-two now, and the old hurt was almost under. Coming back was always a little fresh pang; the absurd stone beast, with his memory of Alan showing her how absurd he was; the little Rodin-and-water statuette that was his first effort, and her mother's purchase, in the hall; a man or so still coming about the house who had known Alan. Not the harassed, married Alan of now, but the young whimsical Alan she had known, with his light-hearted comments on everything it was unwise to make fun of. Joan never let him mock now; he was as carefully kind as his wife. The other thing didn't pay, Heloise supposed. Well, at least this hellish money made you able to do and say what you pleased, with no thought of singing to people like Harriet Jenkinson for your supper. She could be just what she liked.

Her way was not, like her mother's, a bullying way. She simply did not care what she said or did, and tried out things that were expensive experiments. Once she had taken a child to adopt, against her mother's shrill-voiced objections, at first, and more intolerable sentimentality about child-hands filling an empty heart, when it was accomplished.

"Got your metaphors mixed," Heloise said roughly above the sense of shamed nakedness the words gave her—it was too near a fact not to hurt. But she did not keep the child. It did not like her at first, cried and pushed her away; eventually she pensioned it and handed it back to a reluctant aunt. She was getting too fond of it for comfort,

and it seemed like a heartless little thing. Most children of careless upbringing and tender years are, but Heloise, incorrigible romanticist underneath, didn't allow for it. The last thing had been crèches in devastated France, and the mothers had been greedy, and some of them had lied. Now she was drearily back.

In spite of everything, though, it was home. Her rooms were her castle, and she quickened her step a little at the thought of all the things which had become familiar; the big gilded wood statue of pitiful Kwannon, that had come to be almost a friend, and the jade Buddha who always wore her prehistoric only hat when she was indoors. She could always turn the key, and be sure of facing nothing more wounding than the mirrored sight of her own unhappy face.

She strode into her rooms with a sigh of fierce pleasure at getting away from everyone for awhile; and halted with the sigh turned into a gasp; nearly a yelp.

Not one of her household's gods (to speak with unusual literalness) was in sight. Not even the furniture, not even the flooring was the same. Mrs. Jenkinson's destroying hand had fallen. There had apparently been a new invoice of loot in Heloise's absence, and nowhere to put it. For her rooms were in process of being disguised as a cross-section of badly hashed Renaissance palace.

A lot had been done, but an unquestionable lot remained to do. In the middle of the floor, now covered with a tessellated pavement, rather inexcusably, sprang a large authentic marble fountain complete with cherubs. It had been piped to play; and over it knelt a mechanic setting colored electric light bulbs around the outraged Loves. Instead of teakwood furniture she had become used to, florid and foliated gilt erections twisted toward her from every direction. It was rather bad Renaissance, if plentiful, but if it had been the best work of Benvenuto Cel-

lini's pals, Heloise would have been just as furious.

"What are you doing here?" she demanded of the mechanic, as the only person visible. Her tone was sullen.

But superior mechanics are the most independent class on earth; which makes the worst of them overbearing, but gives such as are kindly an inextinguishable philosophy toward the world—so entirely at their mercy. This mechanic, belonging to the latter class, was unmoved.

"How do you think you're going to like that, Lady?" he demanded cheerfully, waving a friendly hand toward the colored bulbs.

The deserted fountain would doubtless have belonged to Cosmo de' Medici, or somebody equally impressive—Harriet used no other. It is within the realms of possibility that Cosmo himself might have set it with purple and yellow lights if electricity had been known in his day. He was not a gentleman who inherited many more standards of taste than Harriet; they'd both had to do a lot for themselves.

Heloise, staring at it in annoyance, felt the annoyance sharpened by the reflection of herself between the sconces of the big mirror beyond. Bulbs or no bulbs, the things were beautiful, and the big yellow-haired electrician kneeling by it belonged with it, somehow; one of those dazzlingly handsome, easy-mannered, boyish souls whom for some reason you find more often whistling and carrying a bag of tools than otherwise. He smiled sunnily at her, in an unconsciousness of inequality and crossness.

"Very nice," she said, reluctantly.

She was still staring across at the hacked-off hair and sullen, sallow face above the draggled clothes, the only jarring sight of the group they made.

The man evidently felt she needed encouragement.

"Oh, you'll like it fine when it gets to playin'," he said. "I tell you, it was some job to get those wires in without showin', and I bet the pipes were worse yet. Your mother's doin' the whole

house over—a lot o' these fancy lighting tricks."

Here his helper, a small Irishman with a wistful monkey face and dark-blue eyes, came to the outside door and summoned him about some difficulty below stairs.

Couldn't she even have her own rooms to herself? Well, she'd hang her disgraceful hat on the marble cupids and fling her untidy belongings around on top of the "fancy lighting tricks" just the same. If all this Renaissance magnificence, with the lighted mirrors and fountains and things, was some new scheme of her mother's to shame her into attractiveness—into being something one of the sculptors could swallow without shutting his eyes quite as tightly as before, it was going to fail just as the rest had. She could always get out if it got too sickening. Russia—she hadn't tried Russia yet.

She went into her bedroom, where, also she locked the door, dropped on a Florentine bed she was in a measure prepared for, and reached out mechanically for the cigarettes on the stand by the bed; swore as mechanically when she found they were not there, and then grinned in spite of herself at discovering a button which slid a cigarette box down a post to you, all complete with an electric lighter. Old Cosmo de' Medici must be having a fit in his tomb—if Mrs. Jenkinson hadn't had *that* thrown in with the lot to set up in the back-yard. Presently she'd rise and draw herself a bath—she had rid herself of maids long since—but just now she was fearfully tired. Yet not so hopeless as usual, somehow. Perhaps all this gilt and electricity was uplifting.

The young workman had come back into the next room, started to whistle, stopped himself considerably, forgotten, and was singing some atrocious popular song now in his heavenly baritone. Only the best music was heard in this house: "I Ain't Nobody's Darlin'" was a sacrilege that Harriet would have leaped on if she had heard it. Yet it was not bad to hear—something with

a distinct tune to it. Her father used to sing tunes till her mother stopped him. . . .

She lay there and rested, to her surprise faintly amused over the whole thing instead of disgruntled, till the clatter of put-away tools, and quick young steps and a closed door, reminded her that it must be five. She had nearly gone to sleep instead of bathing and putting on a less impossible gown.

### III

THE electrifying and otherwise improving of the Renaissance glories Harriet had purchased took much longer than Heloise had expected. But her last trip must have done her nerves good after all, she thought, for she was patient under all the haunting of her rooms by the big electrician and—less usually, for it was a ticklish job—by his melancholy-eyed mate. The subordinate worked more downstairs, on simpler things. The big golden-haired workman, with his easy laugh and utter lack of respect for his betters, did the work in Heloise's suite. It was an elaborate affair, it appeared, something that most people were sure could not be done, and that he was taking a chance on and succeeding with. Dan—his name was Dan Tynan—had thought he could do it, and was right.

Heloise got to feel very shortly that they were friends. His being Dan Tynan and she Heloise Jenkinson made his masculinity negligible in one way, while the fact that, position aside, he was the big, goldenly handsome, winning lad he was, while she was masked in her deliberate ugliness, cut off any possibility of her feeling self-conscious on the other hand. She liked him and basked in his gay and heartening friendliness—he was one of those people whose presence by itself is uplifting—with a feeling of safety which quite deceived herself until he absented himself for two days, Monday and Tuesday. That made three and a half she had not seen him. The little assistant with the wistful monkey-eyes took his

place at some minor tinkering. He was quite as conversational as Dan—more so, indeed—but his chatter made her furious at his daring to speak to her. After he had gone she remembered that what had really stabbed was not the talking, which was quite harmless, and mostly about this here beam being in the way, but his casual remark about Dan.

"He said he couldn't tell me what he was after. 'Twas a girl, small doubt, then," said Tim.

Dan had told her that he was her own age, thirty-two. He naturally would be married this ten years; and the reference to the girl only went to prove he was not. Nevertheless Heloise agonized for a half day. Then she faced the fact. She was falling in love with Dan.

But after a night that was worse than the day she came suddenly to a decision that brought calm. There was no reason why she should stop herself from feeling as she did. He would be gone presently anyhow; it was like falling in love with a statue or a picture. It was just because he was the first man she had allowed herself to see much of or feel kindly to, very likely. Let it go. Something to think of afterward.

Nevertheless when Dan Tynan came back next day she was at first fiercely embarrassed; then, in the light of his presence, relaxed and happy, just to sit at the new inconvenient desk and pretend to work on her crèche correspondence, and let him talk, or talk with him. Insensibly they had reached a point of intimacy; or perhaps it was not insensibly. She felt so conscious now she had found herself out, that it was natural she should imagine something different about him. A something assured, steady in his manner with her; as if he dared to be more actually her friend. The other girl, doubtless. Engaged, and more warm to every woman because of it.

Heloise gave herself to the intimacy more unreservedly than she had ever let herself have human relations with anyone, even Alan. Alan had not had

this man's golden, genial friendliness. Beside, in Alan's time she had hoped and feared; now she was simply living in the minute. The bulbs about the marble cherubs, and some of those over the ceiling, were set wrong, it seemed. They all had to come out and be put back again. One day while Dan was kneeling at work by the fountain she passed and did what she'd wanted to for a long time; touched his soft mop of tawny-gold hair—much better kept than hers was. To make what she had done more casual she said so with her usual brusque indifference.

He said something that would have been impertinent from anybody but Dan.

"With all the time you have on your hands you could keep it neater. It would fluff up fine. I guess your mother doesn't give you much to dress on. Did you ever think of going off and getting yourself a job? I'll bet you could hold it down!"

"I never did," said Heloise grimly, thinking of the excellent sum of money her mother had nothing to do with.

Dan's quality of kindness—sunniness—that aura of warmth some fortunate people scatter—took all offence from what he said, or perhaps somebody caring that much was rather comforting. She actually went shamefacedly into her regal Renaissance bathroom behind her bedroom in an hour or so, and washed her hair. It had needed it. She came out when the electric dryer had done its worst, clad in an almost possible frock, half-shy for his approval; which he gave with a grave brotherliness.

"That looks fine! But say, I think you went wrong getting it bobbed. I guess I'm old-fashioned—I don't hold with short hair on girls. I'll bet you had a lot before you cut it off. Ever try pinning it down under one of those nets? You could curl it first. I guess you think I'm awful fresh, but honest, you'd look lots better. I guess the old lady sort of keeps you under."

Harriet—whose one idea for years had been to deck her for the sacrifice!

But in another way it was more or less true.

She abandoned herself to the pleasure of doing as she was told—she, who her mother had told her for years was “crossed with mule like all the Bunkers but me!” and displayed her waved and netted hair and a new, carefully modest dark tricolette next day for Dan’s approval. She got it in full measure, together with a beauty hint or so more. He took it for granted that she was a helpless Cinderella, and she did not undeceive him. It was a queer intimacy. She had never known anyone so easily human as Dan; nor anyone so closely, as a matter of fact. Here he was, a handsome, virile creature, living in her rooms with her, except for an occasional chaperonage by little Tim, as if they were brother and sister. It was one thing Harriet hadn’t overseen, anyway.

Not that she would have objected to an intrigue, probably, or so Heloise judged. Harriet stood loudly for Freedom of the Soul, and harbored thrilling unmoral celebrities with much more delight than stupidly domestic ones. But there was no danger of that, even if Heloise herself hadn’t disliked such things with the same sick distance she had for all her mother’s doings.

Dan himself was, for all his ease and sunniness, of a strict morality. He had ideas about what “ladies” should or should not do. He frankly thought, for instance, that Heloise, an unmarried lady, oughtn’t to have so many undressed statues and paintings where she could see them. The dressmaker of the monologue who put a “tasty teagown” on Venus di Milo would not have seemed humorous to him. And Heloise, who had gazed with weary and unseeing eye since infancy on all the naked masterpieces her mother could buy, offered no arguments for Art. It didn’t seem much loss to her.

“You’re too much by yourself,” he told her apropos of her indifference, but with approval. “I guess you don’t like these queer ginks your mother lets have the run of the house. You ought

to get her to give you a nice Victrola and some good records. It would cheer you up a lot.”

And Heloise, who had lent a weary and unlistening ear to Pablo Casals in person, subsidised for Harriet’s home the week before, who had listened scornfully to handpicked Metropolitan performers as she walked past the music-room, for more years than she cared to count, agreed with a light of interest in her eye, and helped Dan mark “Songs No Home Should Be Without” for an hour. It helped her to endure at dinner the new South American poet, a mulatto gentleman with lofty manners and black nails.

Yet, after a month of this close friendship, so low did she rate herself that when Dan told her he was through with the job now, and wanted her society for life, she felt as if she had been struck by lightning. His proposal was as gentle and matter-of-fact as everything else about him.

“It sounds crazy,” he went on, “but I think you’d be happier than you are here, Heloys. The old lady’s too bossy for you to be comfortable at your age, and I know you don’t like the goings on. I—I’d be as good to you as I know how, dearie.”

He spoke on of a nice little flat, fixed up homelike, not chilly and movie-theater-looking like this; of his own mother, who was like folks, and a great hand for petting; and he sounded to Heloise like a knight of old offering to take her on his saddle-bow and bear her away, for all her enchantment of unattractiveness. But she spoke with the old brusquerie.

“Mother would raise hell!”

Dan looked restlessly out of the window.

“We’d have to do it and tell her afterwards.”

“And—Dan, I have some money, did you know?” The last of the old suspiciousness peeped out for a minute.

He faced her with undoubted honesty.

“No, I didn’t. But I don’t want you to take it along, or any more of it than will buy you dresses, if that makes

things nicer for you. You're not one that likes to be beholden to anybody, I know that. Or isn't there enough for that?"

"Just about enough," said Heloise recklessly. It would have bought robes for St. Ursula's eleven thousand virgins. But she made up her mind to pass it over to trustees, all but a plausible current expenses fund. Maybe sometime she would tell him about it, but not for awhile now. Not till she was sure he loved her—poor romance-hungry Heloise!

"Well?" he was smiling sunnily down at her—a little anxious, too.

She fixed her great black eyes on his, half-frightened.

"All right, Dan."

Then the Prince bent down and kissed her.

#### IV

HER mother may have shrieked, her acquaintances may have howled with laughter; the marble halls she had deserted on the second floor may have housed celebrities from Hong-Kong or Zulu-Land, or been reduced to lime by Harriet's epic vengeance; but Heloise knew nothing about it and cared less. They were living in the flat of Dan's description; they had a Victrola on the instalment plan, and they went to the movies a lot, sometimes with the Bammans on the floor below. Day by day Dan brought gayly in such home-cheering things as kittens, new records, a ukulele, and—one extravagant night—an electric percolator at wholesale rates. By degrees all this, of course, and economically.

Heloise should by all precedents have blundered over the housekeeping, wept over the accounts, burnt herself when she tried to curl her hair, and missed bitterly going upstairs in the Jenkinson tame elevator. But nothing like that happened. She had never been the slightest good at æsthetics, but she waved a wicked frying-pan—she slung a mean rice-pudding. In words not Dan's, she was a natural cook and

housekeeper, who needed only a recipe and some boxes of materials to make Dan overeat blissfully, and knew by inspiration just where everything in the flat would show to the best advantage. She thought of the old days of dust and disorder with pitying agony.

Any heredity-hound could have told her that her mother had painstakingly forgotten a superlative talent for housekeeping when her father's income rose to the butler point, but she did not know this. Heloise wondered at her own capacity and improved it. When she had saved up enough out of the housekeeping money she was going to have a vacuum cleaner. She belonged in this life as entirely as she had not belonged in the other one, that hateful other one, remembered now as a gilded nightmare of movie splendors and curiously acting, showing-off people. The splendors simply stood for everything she hated to remember, and when she remembered that few celebrities care to seek an electrician's home, be it never so cheerful, she felt distinctly pleased. She was a "throwback," she explained to Dan when he wondered once if she missed things, to the New England country grandmothers who had "faculty" and did all their own housework. And Dan chuckled with indulgent admiration of her for knowing about such things as throwbacks.

But all she really missed was unhappiness. Dan's kindness, his freely given love and sympathy, his easy gaiety and admiration of her newly discovered talents, his pride in her new color and roundness, and his delight in the beautifully built figure she had shrouded in ill-made clothes—all of the being needed and wanted and admired that makes women happy—wrapped her in absolute content.

That is, except for a little dread of her mother-in-law's advent. All she knew of them was the popular tradition, backed by her own mother's tales of epic battles with the senior Mrs. Jenkinson: a stout foe, but one vanquished eventually by a gold hair-brush, hurled as a final argument

through a fifteenth century mirror. Old Mrs. Tynan was, for some months after their marriage, recuperating from a serious and delicate operation at the Mayo sanitarium. Dan wrote her with devoted pains every Friday night, and she always answered him twice—Tuesdays and Thursdays. Heloise was shown all the letters—simple and honest and loving. She was a good mother so far as could be told by mail, but that wasn't very far, in spite of the messages of welcome to the new daughter-in-law.

But when Mrs. Tynan senior came back she simply made things nicer. She proved to be a plump, laughter-loving person with Dan's sunniness and a kindly shrewdness that would probably show more in Dan when he was his mother's age. She liked to get on without friction with those about her, and was indeed a great hand for petting. Presently Heloise began to give her a timid affection, which she returned demonstratively; and indeed got in a surprisingly short time to a point of active mothering.

Not Harriet's kind. The Jenkinson household had been one of continuous nervous tension. A forty-horse-power personality which (to mix metaphors) drives over everybody like the car of Juggernaut, makes for strain to the point of queerness. But here, in the sunshine of the Tynan laughter, the cheerful music of the Tynan phonograph, the devotion of the Tynan family, Heloise too began to get becomingly plump. Not more than comparatively; but the hollows and drawn places were not there any longer, nor the desperate expression. If you had seen her, with the good lines of her figure showing under the good lines of the ready-made, clinging little frocks, fussing over her hair so the ends wouldn't stick out of the net and the waves would make it look really long, and with Mother Tynan chuckling at her, and teasing her for prinking as they waited for Dan, you would no more have known her for the untidy scarecrow of the last four years than

for the awkward bejeweled flapper of the pre-Alan days. She was young Mrs. Tynan, with a place in the world, and work she did well, and a family who loved and admired her.

In short, there wasn't a thing Heloise asked of life in those days that it didn't give her, except maybe a baby; and there were hopes of that. She looked at Dan sometimes in a sort of wonder that anyone as radiant as he should have wanted her, as she was then—dingy, cross, untidy, old looking. The person Dan had made her—the woman she saw in the glass when she dressed and undressed, with the soft wavy hair loose to her rounded olive shoulders, and the great black eyes alive and happy above a smiling mouth—Dan might have liked *her*. But the old draggled Heloise—

But when she said so to him, once, Dan came over to where she sat in her silk slip before the glass and put his arms around her. She could see the clear fair tan of his face against her flushed, darker one, and his tawny gold hair against her black waves, for a moment before he pulled her very tight.

"I do love you about fifteen times more than I did then," he said with a passion that was foreign to easy-going Dan. "But"—he changed to a lighter tone, as if he had not meant to let go so—"but that's about fifteen times more than most women get loved, anyway! It's eleven o'clock, kid, and the alarm sings at seven. Stop staring at your fatal beauty and come to bed."

But no pathway is entirely smooth forever. One small worry came up over the horizon—at least to Heloise, with sound financial instincts in her blood, it was a worry, a chance going by. Dan could have bought a big electrical supply business in a nearby suburb, at a ridiculously low price; but he hadn't the price. There was only a little in the savings-bank. There had been the mother's operation, and another operation a year before that. And though they had put away a fair proportion of Dan's earnings since marriage, it was only a drop in the bucket. The amount of money Heloise had con-

fessed to come short, too, even if Dan had been willing she should hand it over, which he was not. If she told him she had lied... Dan disliked being lied to. The old mother had told her once of an incident of his boyhood—a boy chum who had lied to him.

"He never said a word. He just left him there. And he never spoke to him again," the tale ended.

Heloise didn't want that to happen to her. She had suggested asking her mother, but Dan had put a firm foot on that, and she was rather glad. Let sleeping dogs lie.

They did not intend to lie, however: One morning she found a most devoted letter out of the blue, in her mailbox with the milk bill. Her mother was taking a chance and forwarding through her bank, which had criminally refused Heloise's address. But never mind. Harriet was broad enough to realize the beauty of Heloise's wonderful step, casting aside social trammels as it had; and there was a near dinner-party, complete with society leaders and Yogis, arranged for Heloise and her Hero from the Ranks. They had better get there by six, because dear old Arturo Ardanelli, the Italian Cubist, whom she had just bailed out, was staying at the house and liked his meals on time.

If Heloise Tynan could have laid her ears back flat she would have. She wasn't going to be paraded as a freak, nor have Dan. She walked to the telephone, whose number she had carefully kept from Harriet by nonlisting, and told her so through the long-suffering housekeeper. Then she put it out of her mind and went marketing.

## V

It was a pleasant day like any other up to nine that night. Mother Tynan had trotted comfortably off to bed in possession of the last Ethel M. Dell novel in the cheap edition, leaving the living-room to the young people and a new record that Dan, who was music-mad according to his lights, had brought home. Dan had had a tiring

day, and was lying on the green rep-couch with his arm around Heloise, who was sitting against him with one eye on the Victrola. Dan was in one of his moods of affectionate teasing, and was trying to ruin the careful edifice of hair his wife had constructed with nets and pins. Heloise was fending him off with one hand, trying to concentrate on the end of the record through her struggles. They were both laughing. And then, like Fate knocking at the door, Mrs. Jenkinson pounded heavily and marched in.

Dan looked faintly annoyed; Heloise frankly cross. Mrs. Jenkinson opened fire at once.

"I like this, Heloise! What do you mean by sending word you won't come to dinner, when I've got it all arranged?"

"How did you find the address?" demanded Heloise sharply.

"Bribed Central," said Harriet. "You've got to come."

"I don't intend to," said Heloise in a tone Dan had never heard; mulish, not to say rude.

"You know well enough that man's presentability doesn't matter to me. I hope I'm bigger than *that*," said Harriet, eyeing the entirely presentable Dan, who had risen, naturally, as she entered, but had no especial light of welcome in his eye.

"I wasn't considering your feelings," said the daughter, producing her early or Jenkinson manner as if from mothballs, intact.

"You never have," snapped Harriet. "I insist you come. You don't know how much I've done for you all my life. You owe it to me."

"I don't owe you a damn thing," said Heloise flatly, though she knew Dan disapproved of swearing for women. The occasion demanded it. Harriet here let loose. She bullied Heloise without taking breath for five minutes, regardless of anything they could say to stop her. She reminded her daughter of everything humiliating about herself that had ever occurred, from the time she scratched her god-

mother during baptism down to the incident of letting Alan Trowbridge escape her. She managed to make each incident a fresh reason why Heloise and Dan should come to dinner. Finally, Dan, finding interruptions ineffectual, took his mother-in-law by the arm.

"If you don't stop abusing Nelly I'll have to put you out the door," he said with unquestioned sincerity. "Quit it, now!"

She did not quit it. He gave her two more minutes, then moved toward the outer darkness with her in his grip. She was helpless, but as he released her outside she fired a final shrill shot.

"She owes me one thing, you ungrateful creature! I paid that man to marry you, Heloise! He can't deny it. I knew you'd never get one any other way, and I was ashamed to think my daughter couldn't get a man to look at her!"

Dan had locked the door in her face in another moment, but it was a barren victory. He stood, there, dead-white, and Heloise stared at him. She had not believed it till she saw his face.

"Dan—is it—"

"Yes. It's true."

Heloise had never been a crying woman, but it was so sudden, so shattering in horror, that she crumpled against the couch, sobbing helplessly, as men struck on certain nerve centers sob. She flung off his hand on her shoulder.

"I might have known—I might have known—" she gasped.

"You mightn't—you couldn't—you shan't say that about yourself. Nelly, for God's sake let me tell you—"

She sat up and faced him, the old sullen, stony look on her wet face.

"Oh, tell, if it amuses you. Don't be long, I want to pack."

He accepted that.

"Mother would have died if she hadn't had that operation and the after care. It all came to nearly two thousand dollars, and I hadn't a red cent. The operation before took everything I could scrape, even my life insurance

was mortgaged. That old devil found it out, the third or fourth day I went there to put the juice all over that marble junk shop of hers. Got it out of that fool Tim, maybe—he's never said. She put it up to me. I didn't know you. God knows what the big idea was, I don't! Rich people like her have crazy notions. I thought it over awhile, that time I went off for two days. . . . I did like you, Nelly. I was sorry for you—and you know we got to be real friends. I'd have wanted to get you out of there, even if she hadn't fixed it up. Not marrying—I'd never been on the marry anyway—knew I couldn't with Mother to keep. I wasn't crazy over you the way I am now, but I wouldn't have done it if I hadn't liked you and been sure I could give you a better time than you had. I told you I'd make you happy, and I have—haven't I, Nelly Nelly, haven't I?"

He was down beside her now, his arms around her, pleading hard. For a minute she nearly gave in. Then the Jenkinson stubbornness ("*I was sorry for you*" . . .) stiffened in her, and she pushed him away and rose.

"You lied," she said. "I thought you were the only person that had ever cared for me, and—you didn't. She bought you for me, like Alan Trowbridge and the fountain and the mirrors . . . It was very noble of you . . . you and mother ought to be in a movie together."

"Nelly, don't! You've got it on me—but for God's sake don't go off and leave me—I couldn't stand it! Nelly!"

But she shook herself free.

## VI

SHE mechanically took a suite at the Ritz. She always had when things got unbearable at her mother's. Two days later found her just sitting there still, as if she was a clock that had run down. Then the office called. An elderly lady wanted to see her. There was a gentleman with her . . .

Mother Tynan and Dan . . . Well,

let them come up. (Nothing they could say would make any difference.)

But when they did come up, the ghastly shock when she saw who it really was told her that she had wanted to see Dan, at least. Nothing would move her, but she wanted to see him. Instead of the Tynans it was her own mother, and her last tame celebrity; Harriet's spare little hateful figure in its priceless fur coat, with the hard face and snapping eyes peering out between a high collar and a low-pulled hat. The celebrity, whom she remembered dimly at table as the South American poet with the black naida, was waved into the next room. Harriet took command of the situation on the spot, of course, which meant locking the doors, ignoring the poet in the distance (he shut himself obediently into Heloise's bedroom) and opening fire on Heloise.

"I wonder you dare to sit there and look at me; a woman who first abandoned her mother, then her husband!" was her first astonishing statement.

Heloise went on looking. She hadn't known from what angle her mother would row her, but she had known the rowing was bound to come, as soon as she saw her enter.

"What did you expect me to do, after you broke your word of honor to Dan?" she inquired in the listless tone that most infuriated Harriet.

Harriet reddened angrily.

"I had a right to use what measures I wanted to to make you see your duty."

"Well, the only thing you can do for me now, having destroyed any chance I had of being happy with my husband, is to take your poet and go home," said Heloise, still listlessly.

Harriet who had been perched on one of the brocaded chairs, sprang angrily and began to pace the floor and talk. Heloise still felt too deadened to put her out. Let her talk till she ran down. Presently she would hate her. Just now nothing mattered.

"What right had you to leave your husband?" stormed Harriet, patrolling

the carpet. "Considering his class in life, he was physically and mentally and morally your superior. What pleasure do you suppose he found in marrying anything that looked and acted in the unfeminine, sloppy way you did? *He* had some feeling for his mother. It was a case of seeing her die before his eyes, or marry you. And he married you. As far as I can see he's treated you very well—you seemed crazy enough about him, anyway; you'd accommodated yourself to his bourgeois ways as you never did to those in your own class of life. I think him a wonderful character—I shall ask *him* to dinner whether you come or not!"

Harriet stopped and glared in conscious nobility as she stated this handsome intention.

"Ask him, by all means!" said Dan's wife sardonically.

"He'll come!" said Harriet swelling. "I've had the most satisfactory relations with him—for his class he has decent instincts. He has paid me back almost all I gave him to marry you. True nobility—"

"He did?" interrupted Heloise, galvanized to feeling for a moment.

"Cannot be hidden," went on Harriet. "And to think of your turning on him, because he couldn't like your face to begin with! For vanity and sentimentality you've left him forever—a man who did you the biggest favor of your life! You loved him—*love* him! You love Heloise Jenkinson's pride and ridiculous romanticism, that's all you ever loved or ever will love!"

"Do go away," said Heloise, in the old stony way. (He'd paid back?)

"Darling, don't think, because your old mother talks to you for your good she doesn't know what it is to suffer!" she said. "I won't say another word to you about going back to that man. After all, you were brave to stand him so long." She put both arms around the unresponsive Heloise, who stiffened. "Come back with your mother. We won't say any more about this tragic experience. And now that you know—"

"Oh, won't you go?" demanded Heloise, rising to her feet, one hand at her choked throat.

But Mrs. Jenkinson had a final boon to offer. She stood and smiled mercifully at Heloise.

"We'll get a divorce," she said, "and then—" her voice dropped. It came to Heloise suddenly that this was what she had been leading up to all the time. "And then, dear—"

She waved a flashing hand to the

bedroom where the tame poet was caged. "He says you are much improved," she hissed. "He—"

Heloise stood very still for a moment. Then she walked to the telephone and got a number. Her mother, stopped in mid-career, watched her, one hand, out to release the poet on her, poised in the air.

"I want Mr. Tynan. . . . Dan? This is Nelly. . . . I'm at the Ritz. Please come and take me . . . home."



THERE are two sorts of men with political influence—those with influence enough to make the laws, and those with influence enough to break them



A WOMAN seems perfect to you twice in her life. Just before you have kissed her for the first time and just after you have kissed her for the last time.



STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, OF SMART SET

Published monthly at New York, N. Y., for April 1, 1923.

STATE OF NEW YORK }  
COUNTY OF NEW YORK } ss.

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Eltinge F. Warner, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the Smart Set, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit: 1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publisher, Smart Set Company, Inc., 25 West 45th St., New York City; Editors, George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken, 25 West 45th St., New York City; Managing Editors, George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken, 25 West 45th St., New York City; Business Manager, Eltinge F. Warner, 25 West 45th St., New York City. 2. That the owners are: Smart Set Company, Inc., E. F. Warner, George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken, 25 West 45th St., New York City; Perkins-Goodwin Co., 33 West 42nd St., New York City. Stockholders of Perkins-Goodwin Co. are: E. F. Crowe Estate, F. W. Westlake, S. Goodman, J. A. Brady, Louis Calder, John Atkins, W. F. Anders, C. W. Rantoul and C. T. Rue, all of 33 West 42nd St., New York City. 3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken, 25 West 45th St., New York City; E. F. Warner, 25 West 45th St., New York City; Perkins-Goodwin Company, 33 West 42nd St., New York City. 4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of March, 1923. (Signed) E. F. WARNER, Business Manager.  
My commission expires March 30, 1924. [SEAL] A. W. SUTTON, Notary Public.

# Scenes from the Life of an American Journalist

*By George Rodier Hyde*

## I

**A** GOOD newspaper editor has been described as "a man who knows where Hell will break loose next, and gets a reporter first on the scene." I have been taught to get there first, and to see if any friends of the editor are involved.

## II

IN a western State, several corporations combined and spent nearly a million dollars in defeating a municipal public utility act. Three newspapermen received but \$100 a week for six weeks as their share of the million.

## III

MANY years ago a man with a name beginning with "KW" shot and killed the brother and co-publisher of a newspaper because of a political attack. To-day, that name is barred from that paper, regardless of whether it is borne by a direct descendent, a new species of fish or a racchorse.

## IV

I ONCE had a managing editor who was always sending reporters out of the city on stories that never materialized. After the reporter had received the expense money, on the O.K. of the managing editor, they would meet in Mike's, split, and go on a protracted spree.

116

## V

PROFESSOR Edgar Lucien Larkin told me that every time a reporter wrote a story on a scientific subject, it took scientists 2,000 years to live it down.

## VI

WHEN Mr. Cox was nominated at the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco, I became so drunk with enthusiasm and other things that I swiped the speaker's gavel as a souvenir. Next day the nomination of a vice-president was delayed until a new gavel could be procured.

## VII

IN a certain Pacific port, Johnny Walker Red Seal hootch and Bols gin are procurable from trans-Pacific boats. The waterfront reporters banded together, gave a high federal official a quart, and induced him to issue an order that thereafter they should not be searched coming from boats, on the ground that it interfered with the speedy dispatch of news into their offices.

## VIII

RECENTLY a former United States Senator, noted for his eccentricities, died. My managing editor told me he was the original for Peter B. Kyne's "Cappy Ricks" stories. I learned to the contrary. "Get Pete to stand for

the story anyhow," I was instructed, "Senator X is dead."

IX

I KNOW a prostitute who tips me off to church scandals.

X

I HAVE an acquaintance who was formerly a bishop in New York City. Relating an attack made upon him by members of his denomination, he said: "They first started out to get something immoral on me. But I had taken care of that."

XI

A REPORTER on an opposition paper stole several stories from my desk. I planted a fake story, which he lifted and published. Today he is a United States District Attorney prosecuting Volstead violation cases.

XII

ONCE a woman friend of mine lost her week's allowance in a poker game. She appealed to me. I wrote a story of her being held up and robbed. Her husband did not beat her that night.

XIII

I KNOW of a newspaper that built up a tremendous circulation by publishing daily a picture of a pretty girl showing a prettier leg. Today the same paper is holding Methodist and Baptist advertisers by refusing to publish even an ankle.

XIV

I HAVE worked for a publisher who waged a campaign for the installation of artistic electroliers on the main street of his city. Afterward he purchased a silver loving cup, paid for the engraving, had it presented to himself by a group of "appreciative citizens" and then published the picture of the presentation in his own paper. He also wears a toupée.

XV

IN a western city a Crime Suppression Commission is composed exclusively of newspaper publishers and editors. At their first meeting they barred reporters "that discussion may be more free."

XVI

I USED to edit an "Answers to the Lovelorn" column. It was productive of many interesting telephone numbers.

XVII

I HAVE only once deliberately held a story out of my paper. That was when a former Follies girl got me stewed on absinthe.

XVIII

WHEN I see a picture of an actress twice in one week in the same paper, I begin wondering whether it's the editor, the managing editor or the publisher who is untrue to his wife.

XIX

DURING a San Francisco tong war a Chinaman was shot down in front of his own door. I wrote: "A moment after Quong Lee *kissed* his wife good-by—" And it was published. No one in the office knew that Chinese do not osculate.

XX

SIX out of every ten murder cases I have worked on have resulted in my taking the widow, the sister, the sister-in-law, the sweetheart or the inamorata out to dinner, under the guise of offering consolation. Usually I secured a scoop, which resulted in a sudden termination of friendship.

XXI

I ONCE posed for a corpse to illustrate a murder scene.

## XXII

I HAVE heard Frederick O'Brien tell the real story of his encounter with the Polynesian Amazon in the Marquesan jungle.

## XXIII

I WAS once a party to a newspapermen's union. We lost all heart when the publishers gave us a voluntary wage increase of from two-fifty to five dollars a week.

## XXIV

WHEN I was in the army my Captain confiscated my copy of Upton Sinclair's "The Brass Check." He told me that socialistic literature was not allowed, but permitted me to keep my Bible.

## XXV

I KNOW a newspaper sob sister who married a perpetually drunken newspaperman to reform him. She took to drink and he left her.

## XXVI

I KNOW eighteen judges I can go to and get them to say from the bench anything I suggest, if it will make a good story.

## XXVII

I HAVE met 200 women who, when I told them I was a reporter, "wished" they could write. All but eight of them admitted they had never tried.

## XXVIII

WHEN a newspaperman friend of mine married, I acted as best man. When his wife brought suit for divorce, I testified for her.

## XXIX

ON a beat I covered a few years ago was a District Attorney who used

atrocious English. When he refused me a story I would quote him verbatim.

## XXX

IN a newspaper campaign I waged against a vivisection measure, I aroused so much adverse sentiment by the simple expedient of referring to its sponsor as "Nick" instead of Nicholas that I beat it.

## XXXI

I ONCE wrote a story of a husband who brought suit for divorce against his wife on the ground that she believed in platonic love. The lady telephoned my editor and in no uncertain terms told him I had been misinformed.

## XXXII

By modern standards a reporter is out of the "cub" class when he has brains enough to develop a "mysterious woman in black" at an inquest or to write that the unidentified woman suicide "was expensively, though modestly gowned, and wore the sheerest of silk lingerie," regardless of her apparel.

## XXXIII

I HAVE yet to get a signed story into print that didn't tip some collection agency off to my whereabouts.

## XXXIV

EXPERIENCE has taught me that when a prominent citizen dies and leaves a \$100,000 estate, he should be called a millionaire; if he leaves a \$250,000 estate he should be called a multi-millionaire, and if he leaves \$500,000 or over he should be referred to as "a modern Croesus." If a girl is arrested twice for writing bad cheques to satisfy a pretty clothes complex she should be designated as "the girl who is too pretty to be good," and if a married man gets caught by his wife in the home of a widow, the place should be referred to as "the love nest."

# 'Loan Exhibit

*By S. N. Behrman and J. K. Nicholson*

## I

MRS. LOVELL, landlady of the "Avon Studios," grandly reciting to potential roomers the roster of her tenants, allowed a special halo to play about the name of Henrietta Swayzee, "wife of the restaurant man, you know." Neither Matthew Noon, who "ushered in St. Gregory's Sundays," nor Daisy Schraider, the cabaret singer, nor Ben Fulda, the artist, conveyed quite the flavor imparted by the name of Mrs. Henrietta Swayzee. For Mrs. Swayzee represented, unmistakably, the aristocracy of the Upper West Side. Everybody knew Milton Swayzee, at any rate knew his lunch-rooms. Their white-enameled fronts were visible on a dozen of the busy thoroughfares from the Battery to the Harlem River. And Henrietta was Milton's wife, shared his bed and board in a spacious apartment on West End Avenue. . . . But strange to relate, Mrs. Swayzee kept a room in the Avon Studios and came down to it almost every day—often as not in her limousine—to "practise her art." Her happiest hours, she had repeatedly told Mrs. Lovell, were passed in the artistic and liberating atmosphere of the 36th Street "studio" house.

Pridefully, Mrs. Lovell would display Mrs. Swayzee's sanctum—a cupboard of a room next to Ben Fulda's—and use it as a symbol of what could be done in a small compass by a person of "artistic tastes." In this hermitage, so Mrs. Swayzee had often told her landlady, she found refuge from the artificialities and social distractions of West End Avenue; here she came as to a rendezvous to woo

the coy and difficult Goddess of Art.

In truth Mrs. Swayzee's tenancy was a valuable asset for Mrs. Lovell; her wealth and social status—like Matthew Noon's connection with St. Gregory's—gave to her Bohemia an air of respectability she coveted. Secretly, Mrs. Lovell disapproved of her true Bohemians: Orville Kincaid, the model; Dwight Rankin, the poet-playwright; Ben Fulda, the artist. She liked steady-going people who paid their rent on time and had no points of contact with the police. But she had discovered that the atmosphere of Bohemianism paid; art seemed to be a weakness with many people and you could, under its ægis, effect economies. Splash your plastered walls with primitive coloring and you save papering; tinted gauze swathed around electric bulbs made dispensable more expensive fixtures.

Mrs. Lovell talked so much about Mrs. Swayzee because in her was epitomized the exact fusion of respectability and Bohemianism which was Mrs. Lovell's ideal. To young artists and to those who aspired to be artists Mrs. Lovell would quote Mrs. Swayzee to the effect that here, of all places in New York, could one infuse the inspiration so necessary to artistic creation; to others, prosaic workers in the everyday world, Mrs. Lovell would dilate on Mrs. Swayzee's up-town flat and Mr. Swayzee's restaurants. Mrs. Lovell had never met Mr. Swayzee; it was one of her unrealized ambitions, but she talked about him as if she did know him. And to hesitating would-be tenants she always conveyed, with varying degrees of subtlety, that what was good enough for the wife of Milton Swayzee—

## II

HENRIETTA SWAYZEE's partial tenancy of the Avon Studios was indeed a tribute to the isolation one might achieve there but not exactly a tribute of the sort Mrs. Lovell imagined. For once, Mrs. Lovell, the experienced, the suspicious, was fooled. But then so, as a matter of fact, was Mrs. Milton Swayzee herself. She was fooled with that completeness, that consummate artistry of deception, which one can practise only on one's self. At first she blamed Fulda. But she was afflicted with an essential candor of spirit which made her see that it wasn't Fulda who was to blame, but she herself.

Five years before her marriage to Milton Swayzee, of the "one-armed" refectories, Henrietta Teague had abandoned South Bend, Indiana, where resided her parents, to come to New York to study art. She made this step directly against the wishes of her father, a teacher of Latin and Greek in the local high-schools. That sympathy with the arts and broadness of outlook supposed to be developed by familiarity with the dead languages did not infuse Henrietta's father: he was intensely parochial, believed firmly that New York was subversive of all the virtues practised in South Bend, and that moral dissolution was the inevitable corollary of any artistic pursuit. He wanted his daughter to continue teaching drawing, music and physical culture in the Grammar School (these three subjects were traditionally taught by the same person) until she was invited to marry by some likely young man.

But Henrietta was not allured by the prospect. She knew the sort of young man she was likely to marry: either a teacher or some promising young "hustler" in the town. Her taste for the tranquil life of a middle-class matron had been completely undermined by her reading of George Moore and the lives of the French Impressionists. Manet and Monet, Degas, Matisse, Pissaro—these were the heroes of whom she dreamed. She longed for

Paris and the ateliers, to do stark and startling things with brush and pencil: nudes, sensuous and ugly, bovine women, distorted faces leering out of crowds, attitudes earthen, animalian.

She had been told she had talent and believed it. She had ideas for pictures and their visualization in her mind's eye impressed her with their force, their originality. But in New York, at the Art Institute, she found herself subjected to a dreary routine of class-work. It appeared that her draughtsmanship was extremely faulty: around her she saw girls and boys, younger than herself, producing with ease and rapidity studies which to her were a slow agony. An irritated instructor told her bluntly one day that she had no talent. Nevertheless she persisted through the year, living frugally on the thousand dollars she had saved in South Bend. When the money was nearly gone she faced the alternative of returning home to teach the customary trilogy or getting a job in New York. She decided to stick it out another winter.

She tried magazine illustrating without much luck. The editors told her her stuff was too conventional, reminiscent. She had abandoned now her ideal of a stern realism in art, and lugged around to the art editors canvases decorated with young ladies in an extremely rosy state of health looking archly into the eyes of clean-razored gentlemen in flannels. But what was wanted was a new type of beauty . . . not Gibson nor Christy nor McMein but something new. This new type Henrietta seemed unable to evolve and she was forced to abandon free-lancing in favor of a regular job. She got one in an "art" factory, coloring Christmas cards and birthday greetings.

What the solicitations of her father could not accomplish the art-factory did and after six months of drawing little doves floating pretty ribbons with gratulatory legends from their pink bills and chrome-yellow bells ringing glad tidings from snow-cruled belfries, Henrietta decided to go back home to

teach music, drawing and gymnastics to the children of South Bend. Almost at the verge of her departure, Fate, somewhat fleshily symbolized by Milton Swayzee, intervened and Henrietta remained in New York.

### III

MILTON was a widower of forty-five addicted to white vests with pearl buttons and black stripes, invariably bridged by a watch-chain from which dangled a gold anchor. In his youth he had been in the Navy and once, while drunk in Norfolk, he had been heavily tattooed. At least so he told the story.

Mr. Swayzee was proud of these etchings in his skin and the first time he met Henrietta he rolled back his sleeves and showed her the colorful designs on his fore-arm: a green fish, with the scales pricked neatly and symmetrically, on one arm and a skull and bones on the other. Henrietta shuddered slightly and Milton hastily assured her that all this had happened when he was a "young buck." Now he devoted himself whole-heartedly to his restaurants and his investments.

Henrietta "appealed" to Milton at sight. He told her so. A man, he generalized, "gets lonesome." It appeared that Milton was introspective. Often, in the evenings, as he sat alone in his apartment on West End Avenue, ("sets me back five thousand plunks per annum") he asked himself questions. What was he working for? What was he piling up money for? It wasn't as if his first wife, Pauline, had endowed him with children. No, there was nothing to work for. His life's work was nothing. All his success was as nothing, a mockery, an empty husk. People said to him often: "Milton, you must be a happy man!"

Little did they know, these superficial observers.

And yet he might be happy. He was not naturally a misanthrope. He had latent capacity for cheerfulness. If a little girl like her, like Henrietta—

### IV

HENRIETTA, the little girl, considered. She considered coldly. Milton was not the man of her dreams. He was voluble and puffy. She thought him rather unduly complacent. He regarded his chain of restaurants with as much pride as though they were so many Parthenons. Nevertheless, there were compensations. He was rich. He was amiable. He could be humored. . . .

For several months Henrietta temporized. Milton showered her with gifts, entertainments. She made the lunch-room king take her to plays and concerts which bored him excruciatingly but which he endured for her sake. After he had suffered through plays by Guitry and Barrie they arrived at a compromise. They agreed to alternate their preferences. Mr. Swayzee referred to himself as a "fifty-fifty guy" and his willingness to expose himself to pessimistic foreign plays and other esoteric novelties he used in evidence as proof of his essential fairness of spirit. So "Ladies' Night" was sandwiched between "Deburau" and "Mary Rose." And the price she paid for "The Emperor Jones" was "Listen Lester."

In his courtship, too, Mr. Swayzee became indurated to concerts. He heard violinists and orchestras, lost in amazement that people should listen voluntarily and without protest to these unaccountable falls and geysers of sound. . . . Once, during the long slow movement of Beethoven's Sixth, he fell into a guarded slumber and snored faintly. Henrietta was really provoked; she decided, in that moment, to go back to South Bend to teach.

Nevertheless, when Milton demanded, at the end of two months, to know his Fate, she accepted him.

She accepted him conditionally. She had a frank talk with him. She pointed out the difference in their ages, in their tastes. If she married him, she must be free to live her own life, to have her own friends, to continue the career her

poverty had made impossible. She had told him of her struggle to become a painter and he had listened and nodded, though such an ambition was incomprehensible to him.

"I'm not going to be content to be just a married woman and sit at home and twiddle my thumbs," said Henrietta earnestly. "I'm going to study and work harder than ever. And you mustn't interfere with me!"

Milton blinked and nodded. He was impatient to be done with these trivialities.

"You mean you wanta paint! Why not? Go as far as you like. You can paint your pretty little head off if you get any fun out of it. I used to paint myself—in the old days. Paint the town red!"

This witticism sealed their courtship. Over his bulky shoulder she saw again the lost, obscured visions of two years before . . . bold and defiant figures, lost to salvation, sketched with swift and sure mastery, skeletonized cities, their skyscrapers swaying mast-like in a rushing gale. . . .

## V

BUT, for a long time Henrietta found it restful to relax among the comforts provided by Mr. Swayzee's restaurants. She found plenty to do: the apartment on West End Avenue was full of monstrosities, gigantic objects made of teakwood and bronze which bulged in corners and sprawled in the middle of well-proportioned rooms. Most of this stuff Henrietta had sold—except a bronze model of the Statue of Liberty, with a real electric bulb in the lady's fist, from which Milton refused to be parted—and she spent months replacing them with more graceful furnishings. It was very satisfying to ride about town in Mr. Swayzee's limousine, buying things, to lunch in smart restaurants, to go to matinees and concerts. Milton didn't take much of her time; he was absorbed in the project for a new chain of restaurants in Brooklyn and she was

grateful for his club activities which kept him busy many evenings.

Except for minor quarrels, she got along very well with her husband. The most serious was over an episode that happened at a social function in the Elks' Clubhouse in 43rd St. There was dancing in the great "Lodge Room"—a gilt and crimson Valhalla—when suddenly, at eleven o'clock, chimes sounded, the music stopped and the lights went down. Everyone turned to the platform where the musicians sat. Under a solitary light a plump gentleman began to intone an invocation . . . a curious jargon bidding everyone to consecrate the moment to the spirits of vanished Elks. Henrietta began to giggle. Her husband, in a fury, pinched her arm, but Henrietta couldn't stop.

It was a long time before he forgave her this desecration of a deeply solemn rite.

But in the main she lived comfortably enough with him. Occasionally she thought with a pang of her vanished artistic ambitions. Once she even started a canvas but it didn't get very far. The atmosphere of the West End Avenue flat she found stultifying to creation. Nevertheless, she promised herself always to get back to work "one of these days." But she didn't do it. After about a year she began to harbor against her husband an unconscious resentment born of an illusion that he had, by marrying her, interrupted a promising career.

She became increasingly restless, discontented. She hauled out old sketches and made various efforts to do some work but couldn't accomplish anything. These failures she attributed, unconsciously, to her husband.

One day she met Ben Fulda.

## VI

SHE had dropped in to look at the Independents' Exhibition at the Waldorf and was wandering around inspecting the paintings with the external detachment of a great lady, a bit weary of exhibitions. Actually though she

was inflamed and stirred by this mass of work; individual canvases kept staring out at her with a sort of reproach that she had not bothered to create them.

In front of one group she paused. A small painting had attracted her attention, a shoulder of a hill rearing against a mass of scudding clouds. She looked at another, by the same artist, called "The Train"—a rush of engine-smoke, moving piston-like against a dazzle of flying landscape. Then there was a still pond, like Innes. Then there were two lovers on a beach, a leering, bow-legged sailor and a fat, blondined, gum-chewing girl, staring out complacently at the unsullied sea.

There were others ("A Cloak and Suit Pastoral" later won first prize at the exhibition) but in all of them, Henrietta was held fascinated by a curious paradox manifest in the pictures, a sardonic spirit ravished by a dream of beauty. The landscapes were joyous, sun-drenched, wind-shaken; the pictures of machines swift and sword-like, but the men and women were misshapen, a pallingly ugly, cretinous. . . . Henrietta returned to the little picture that had first attracted her attention, the hill and the clouds. She determined to buy it.

The pictures were signed Ben Fulda. As she turned to consult an official she imagined what the painter must be like: she visualized a great, swarthy, Angel-esque head, a photograph she had once seen of Zuloaga.

She approached an elderly man in a frock coat chatting in a corner with a slight, dark youth. She observed this youth: he had a shock of black hair, was straight-nosed and somewhat thick-lipped. He wore a blue coat without a vest, a four in hand tie and black oxfords, needing a shine.

She asked the frock-coated gentleman how one went about buying a picture—"Number 893 by Mr. Fulda."

She was conscious that the boy with the dark hair shot her a look of challenge, of defiance . . . the old gentleman made a gesture of introduction;

"This is Mr. Fulda," he said and he walked away.

## VII

At first she found him uncommunicative to the point of rudeness. He thought she was an idle-rich woman bent on patronising him. He had the heightened class-consciousness characteristic of radical youth: he was instinctively belligerent toward anyone who was expensively dressed and gave other evidences of having money. He was only twenty-four but he had known prison-life in Russia. He hated modern civilization not alone because he had suffered under it but because it produced a race of men and women as ugly as the people in his pictures and cartoons,—hated it as only an esthete can hate ugliness. The radical paper in which Fulda's drawings mainly appeared had come to be known as the best-illustrated magazine in America and it was his merciless cartoons of the youth of America which helped make it so.

Yes, he would sell the picture, but he didn't know for how much. He hadn't thought about it. In fact, he wasn't sure whether he wanted to sell it at all. In fact, thinking it over, now, he was quite certain he *didn't* want to sell the picture.

She begged. He asked her, brutally, why she wanted the picture at all. She could buy a "prettier" picture at Knoedler's.

Then she startled him. Her eyes filled with tears. She wanted the picture, she said, because it was the sort of thing that she, long ago, had herself been ambitious of doing.

He felt suddenly ashamed of himself, a sympathy for her. He had been brutal to her. She was not a rich woman. She was a fellow artist. Also, she was very attractive, very appealing.

He invited her to his studio for tea.

That was how Mrs. Milton Swayzee, wife of the restaurant Croesus, came to know the discreet Bohemianism of the Avon Studios.

## VIII

FULDA had a corner-room on the top-floor of the Avon Studios, larger than the closets occupied by Ben Hallett, the pianist, or Orville Kincaid, the model, but considerably smaller than the royal chambers inhabited by Daisy Schraider or "Doc" Slavin, the panaceist. Henrietta approached the Avon in a mood of high enchantment. Everything delighted her; the dark, precipitous stairs, the neatly arranged figures of wax female models visible through the glass doors of the New Idea Fixture Company on the first landing, the dull red glow shed by tissue-papered bulbs in the upper hall-ways.

In Fulda's room she sat on the single chair, in awesome contemplation of the ascetic environment of genius: innumerable, completed canvases stacked against the walls, innumerable sketches littering the table and the Italian trunk lying flat on the floor, a nearly finished crayon drawing pinned to a low easel—some men and women lolling on the banana-strewn beach at Coney Island: great thighs and arms and torsos diminishing into dumb, complacent faces. The drawing, like many of Fulda's, was terrible for its suggestion of human devolution. . . . She thought of the two oils she had seen at the Waldorf: the pond, sunk in a deeper pool of twilight and the little hill and the free-flying clouds. What sort of boy was this!

Fulda busied himself with a Sterno apparatus, heating the water for tea, which he set for her on the pigment-stained table. He pushed a box of cheese crackers toward her with a smile that was not in the least apologetic or deprecatory:

"I'd like to see your sketches sometime," he said.

"Would you? . . . But of course—!"

"Bring 'em around. I'm curious. Why don't you drink your tea?"

He had already finished his and was pouring another cup for himself.

"I love the way you live here," she breathed.

"It's cheap."

"But I mean the austerity, the—"

"I'm getting damn sick of the austerity."

He smiled again at her, discreetly. But she was in a lofty, earnest mood. . . .

"This is the way for a great artist to live, this is the atmosphere. . . ."

He made a mental note that she was *that* kind of woman. He'd met several of the sort at up-town teas. This was the first time, though, he had taken one to tea with him!

"How I'd love to live this way—simply—away from everybody—with just my work."

"Why don't you?"

"How can I?"

"One can do anything one wants."

"Do you think so?" she asked eagerly. "Do you really believe that?"

Her insistence made him aware that he had uttered a cliché, devoid of truth, but he answered glibly:

"Of course I believe that. If you want to paint—why don't you paint? There's an empty room here—next to mine. Fifteen dollars a month. I'm paying twenty-five but the small one will do for you—in the beginning anyway. Nothing easier—if you're sincere—if you mean what you say. . . . Why don't you drink your tea?"

He finished his fourth cup. She leaned toward him, her cheeks flushed, her eyes alight with excitement:

"Do you think so? Do you really? I could come here—and work—and you would help me?"

"Of course I'd help you—if I could."

The ambiguity was conscious, but she was unaware of it.

"It would be an inspiration!"

She was certainly very pretty. He wondered if, before he left, he could kiss her. He decided he'd better not. It might be fatal to break the high mood of artistic aspiration on which she was launched.

But, before she left, she had seen Mrs. Lovell and engaged the little room next to Fulda's.

## IX

THAT night at dinner, she told her husband of her new plan. He thought it crazy. Why go to a rat-hole on 36th Street to paint pictures when you could sit comfortably in a steam-heated flat on West End Avenue and paint, as he put it, "Your head off." Henrietta explained, as patiently as she could, that the atmosphere of their apartment was unsympathetic to creative work. At home the telephone was always ringing, she was conscious of material things, of the suffocating nearness of people. (She forgot for the moment that the population was much denser at the Avon Studios than at home!) As she talked to Milton she became eloquent: she wanted to concentrate entirely on her art, to lose herself in a creative ecstasy. Had she not told him, before her marriage, that she must be free to live her own life? Had he not promised to let her devote herself to painting, to the career her marriage had interrupted?

Milton recalled that when he met her she had just given up her job with the Litho-Art people and was returning to South Bend to teach school. Henrietta retorted that nothing would swerve her from her determination to resume her painting. Milton said he didn't care what she did so long as she did it afternoons. He didn't propose to have her gadding about evenings. Somewhat frigidly, though considerably relieved, Henrietta advised him that one did not usually paint by electric-light.

She said not a word about Fulda. . . .

## X

THAT night she could hardly sleep; she was as excited as a child on the eve of an excursion. In the morning she got out a pile of old sketches, tied them together and brought them in a taxi to 36th Street. She toiled up the four flights of stairs and opened the door of her new domain with the key Mrs. Lovell had given her the night before.

There was a knock on the door; her heart leaped but it was not Fulda. It was Mrs. Lovell, as obsequious as though she were in the presence of royalty.

Fulda she did not see again till late in the afternoon. Already she had wrought a transformation in the narrow little room. She had put in a dainty chair and table and a handsome white and crimson Indian rug for which she had paid sixty dollars. On the walls were several excellent Japanese prints.

Fulda whistled when he saw these changes. His surprise delighted her.

"I'll be so happy working here," she cried. "This feels like my *real* home!"

"This your stuff?" He saw the pile of sketches lying on the floor and he went forward to examine them while she stood by, conscious of a sort of paralysis of fear. He picked up one, glanced at it, then at another. His face was impassive. He didn't like them! He thought them dreadful! Of course! What could she expect? Hadn't the instructor at the art school told her she had no talent! And here was a genius. . . .

She felt a sort of helplessness, a sickness of despair.

"Crude. But promising. Decidedly."

She could have hugged him. She could have wept. . . .

"Do you really think so?" she said faintly.

"Yes. If you work . . ."

"You think—if I work—I could—I might do something?"

An impulse rose in him to blurt the truth at her, to say: "No. Not in a hundred years! Not in a thousand years!"

It was the impulse of the boy, starved and wounded by life, to hurt someone who was well-fed and well-dressed, cushioned in an easeful existence.

But that would be stupid of course. If he discouraged her now, she would probably give it up, not come back.

"Yes. You ought to do something decent. You have individuality, a touch. It shows in these crude sketches. But I see you've never worked very steadily."

"I will now. Yes, I will now. With you to help me."

He did not answer. His eyes wandered from her face to the newly scrubbed window-pane.

"Rather nice—better than from my window."

Against a clear, deep emerald-green winter sky were picked as if by a burin the outlines of numberless chimneys, smoke-stacks, church-steeple, bulking ware-houses. Piers of smoke rose from East River craft, drifted through the crystalline air, obscured for a moment the clear reds of brick walls and the green of the sky and then disappeared like a film breathed by a housewife on the surface of silverware.

"It's like life," said Fulda.

She didn't know what he was referring to exactly but she said that it was. She felt herself enclosed and held in his mood as in an embrace.

"That sky is like life. Not these lush, prodigal summer sunsets. But this. Cold as the eyes of a sexless woman. Inexorable. Indifferent. Hard. . . . How lonely it is to live. How lonely!"

She shuddered a little. He turned to her.

"Isn't it lonely? Or don't you know . . .?"

"Yes. I know."

She felt pity,—for him, for herself, something of the futility of people scurrying aimlessly in the immensities of space.

"I don't feel so alone—with you near me."

He pressed close to her. She felt he was like a child, huddling from an unseen menace, from an inevitable cruelty. She endured the wounds he had suffered, felt herself scarred by the same destiny which had bruised him. And when his thirsty lips met hers, she stroked, assuagingly, his thick, black hair. . . .

## XI

HER love for him sprang into being suddenly, then. It was the first love of her life, the first time she gave herself, willingly. And yet it was a long time before she was aware how deeply she loved him. For a long time she continued to veil herself in the illusion that it was really her art that mattered to her, that it was because Fulda was an artist, a master, that she was subservient to him, eager for him.

A fortnight passed before she began to do any work at all. The time went in buying things for her tiny "atelier" and in buying things for his: a tea-set, an electric toaster, a decent cot-bed. And there were wonderful walks in the Park, while he talked spasmodically about art and his wanderings and railed against people and the sins of modernity.

Once he made her go with him into an Automat restaurant and insisted that she eat a sandwich—dry at the edges—and some frayed lettuce-salad.

"Imagine people eating this dreadful, slotted stuff!" he growled. "Are these the kind of places your husband owns?"

She made a feeble defence of her husband's restaurants, though she had scarcely ever been in one.

"People are fed these days worse than cattle. And the fools who write in the Liberal journals about the beauty of these hospital-like beaneries!"

And yet she had heard him dithyrambic about the loveliness of the Bush Terminal Building and the sight of Fifty-ninth Street from a knoll in Central Park in a February dusk.

At the end of nearly two months she had not yet completed her first sketch. Every afternoon she came down town to work but at the end of a half-hour Fulda would come in, cast a look at what she was doing and begin to talk about something else. He made her feel, though he never disparaged her ambitions, somehow inadequate. He no longer encouraged her as he did at first and yet she clung to the notion that

she might some day do work that would make him proud of her.

But she found it increasingly difficult to concentrate. And, after a time, Fulda was no longer at home every afternoon. When he did not knock at her door she would go to his. If he wasn't in she would return to her own room, sit in front of the easel and make a pretence of working, listening intently for his step on the stairs.

## XII

ONE afternoon, while she was with Fulda in his room, her husband telephoned. He had an hour or so off and he thought he'd run up to see what she had been doing in the "line of art."

Henrietta ran back to Fulda in a panic to tell him what had happened. She herself was aghast by this vivid revelation of the meagerness of her achievement. She had done nothing at all, not even one sketch finished. And she had been coming down here—"working"—for weeks!

Fulda sat on the edge of his bed, scratching his head.

"Why the Devil don't he attend to his lunch-rooms!" he grumbled.

It was plain to her that this incident annoyed him, not because it was fraught with danger for her, but because it involved him. She became conscious, in that moment, of many things: his increasing irritation with her lately, his unexplained absences, his taciturnity. He had become, recently, quite monosyllabic; when she first knew him she had loved his impetuous garrulity. And she saw, too, in that instant of clarity, why he no longer veiled his contempt of her sketches, why, in the beginning, he had praised them.

Everything fell away from her—the lies she had told herself—and she stood before him, naked, flayed, aware of her nakedness.

He misunderstood the look in her eyes.

"Damn it, don't act so scared. We

can fool him . . . he'll never know a thing."

His face lit with something of his old humor.

"I have it! I'll move my stuff into your room. A loan exhibit! Wonderful! He'll never know the difference—think you've done all of it! He'll be amazed at your productivity—increase your allowance . . .!"

The idea carried him away. Almost immediately he took up an armful of canvases and began to carry them into her room.

When he came back she was still standing there.

"Why don't you get busy?" he shouted, taking up another load of pictures.

She obeyed mechanically, filling her arms with bitter cartoons, impressionistic landscapes. From the easel she took a vivid drawing ("The War Goes On": Dec. 1917 Number of *"The People"*)—it showed two lovers, locked in an incandescent embrace on a park bench, while around their feet swirled a newspaper, bearing the headline: "60,000 Die in Argonne" . . .

In fifteen minutes Henrietta's room looked as though inhabited by a mænad obsessed with a mania for transferring her visions to canvas. Her room was tinier than Fulda's and as he insisted in taking over nearly all his pictures, the effect was of a Titan working furiously in a nutshell. From her easel, Fulda swept rather ruthlessly the still-life sketch which, for some weeks, had been reposing there, and put on his own drawing, "The War Goes On." . . .

He surveyed the room in high glee.

"He won't be able to say you're not industrious! Quantity if no quality. . .!"

## XIII

GASPING and apoplectic, Milton Swayzee reached the top floor of the Avon Studios. When he caught his breath he expressed astonishment that his wife should have been able to find "such a dump."

"Not fit for pigs to live in, Henrietta! Mean to tell me you spend every afternoon here?"

The smallness of her room excited further comment of an ironic nature.

"I didn't ask to see where you hang your clothes—I wanta see where you work."

She assured him this was where she worked.

He stared around at the multitude of canvases, not in the least surprised at their number.

"Let's have a look at some of 'em. . . ." His eyes caught the drawing on the easel.

"My God, Henrietta, you ain't been wasting your time on stuff like this! Call that art?"

She showed him an oil: a dense mass of vegetation in a forest, an impression of fecundity and struggle.

Milton groaned.

"Stuff like this you can do at home!" he said tersely.

"I'm sorry you don't like them."

He thought he detected a break in her voice. He felt he had been too hard on her.

"Oh, if it keeps you out of mischief and you like to do this business—go ahead. Some of it's kind of nice, too."

He sat gloomily for a moment.

"I got no kick coming, if you haven't. But I wish you'd get a cleaner place . . . more air . . . not healthy. . . ."

He stared around at the canvases, in the hope of finding one he could praise honestly. An etching focussed his attention—the bare vertebrae of a bridge, long webs and festoons of steel, finely drawn as threads.

"What's that?" he asked.

"Brooklyn Bridge."

"Looks like something you broil chops on. I was goin' to ask you where you got it and introduce it in my kitchens."

She did not answer. He rose heavily.

"Well, I got an appointment. See you at supper. Be home about seven."

He kissed her and went out. She heard him lumbering down the stairs.

When Fulda came back, impatient to know what impression his pictures had made, he found her laughing hysterically.

#### XIV

THE next afternoon Fulda wasn't in when she came. The day after she found a note from him under the door of her room:

*"I've gone to Mexico with Carl Ellis. Illustrating his magazine articles. I'll look you up when I get back. Ben."*

She sat for a long time looking out of the window at the roofs. It was Spring now . . . the sky was a delicate, caressive blue . . . the smoke from nearby chimneys curled languidly, yielding to little breezes that rose from nowhere and died away. . . .

But she did not see this sky. She remembered another—green and cold—and what Fulda had said that time, the first afternoon she had spent in this room. . . .

That night, at dinner, she told her husband she was giving up the room on 36th St.

"Glad to hear it," he boomed heartily. "Glad you got this art stuff out of your system!"



# Art at 8:30

*By George Jean Nathan*

## I

**T**HAT an idea is not available dramatically until it has become a platitude is itself one of the most platitudinous of dramatic platitudes. But there is a considerable difference in the mere dramatic availability of a platitude and the conversion of the platitude into lively and engaging drama. Good drama, in point of fact, consists in so veiling a basic platitude with the vari-colored gauzes of imaginative beauty that it shall be but vaguely perceptible to those who give it eye and ear. The greater the dramatist the more successful he is in deceiving his audiences as to the existence in his work of the platitude. He is, in a way of speaking, a prestidigitator of platitudes: one whose infinite legerdemain of metaphor, fancy, wit and surface originality is successful constantly in making the ever-present platitude seem to disappear. Pinero's latest play, "The Enchanted Cottage," is grounded upon the platitude that love makes the parties to it oblivious to each other's faults and defects. But instead of triumphing over this platitude, the platitude triumphs over its dramatist. And the result is a play that, for all its occasional moments of beauty, marks still another step in the rapid disintegration of a dramatist who, overestimated as he ever has been by such critics as are given to a greater admiration for blue-print dramaturgy than for the purple-print of a noble imagination, was yet a shrewd craftsman, a graceful penman and a considerable influence in the

theatre of the years that marked the other side of the frontier of the present century.

This disintegration is a peculiarly interesting thing: peculiarly interesting because it betrays how little, after all, mere great technical dexterity matters where the ever-changing years and times have brought with them no bounty of matured invention and fresh inspiration and marching novelty of thought. We thus see Pinero successively serving as the most devastatingly accurate critic of Pinero who ever put pen to paper. We thus see, in each of his successive later plays, Pinero reducing himself to the bare bones of his talent, a talent that was once hailed as genius. That uncommonly fine technique is still there, a skeleton in the closet now grinning pitiably and not a little desolately at all those who once mistook it for a vital philosophical study of the anatomy of love and marriage, of divorce and romance, and of profound human reflexes and impulses. It breaks through the negligible tissue-paper hoop of content, does this technical dexterity, and now at length faces the audience for just what it is: technical dexterity in strip tights—nothing more. Behind it, there is nothing—save the ribbons of pretty pink tissue-paper, and the hole.

"The Enchanted Cottage" is a comprehensive autobiography of Pinero's virtues and shortcomings. It is manipulated with all the old, familiar deftness, it is couched in words that are often polite and pleasing, it reveals in a scene or two that feeling for graceful understanding and pity

which has intermittently distinguished the man. But, with these, it is stark in its disclosure of the bound-in imagination, the thumb-worn processes of thought, the obedience to popular prejudice and the surrender to commonplace dramatic antic that have similarly and not less intermittently distinguished the same playwright. Save in his farces, two of them as good as anything the English-speaking stage has offered, Pinero has presented himself dramatically from the beginning to the now of his career largely as an imaginative rubber-stamp glowing with an architectural passion. He has sought to build strong and beautiful castles upon the quicksands of a talent rent by an excessive sentimentality cloaked in a species of mid-Victorian revolt. He has achieved the walls of these castles, but not the interiors. They have been beautiful and imposing in the degree that the moving picture sets of castles, composed entirely of fronts and with nothing behind them, are beautiful and imposing. A walk around them, and they are mere artful scaffoldings. Thus in this "Enchanted Cottage" we have facing us merely the charming façade of a play. Back of that façade, hardly deceptive enough to fool even the most susceptible, are nothing but literal and obvious props, straining to hold it up.

The rapidly fading resources of Pinero are borne heavily in on the spectator as the play plods along on its heavy course. By way of comedy, the playwright relies upon the antiquated device of causing one character throughout the action to address another by different names. By way of sentiment, he brings on a dream child at the finish to cuddle in a sleeping woman's arms. By way of intensifying the dramatic atmosphere, he lugs in the reliable old thunderstorm. By way of a substitute for vernal fancy, he reverts to the time-honored dream device, negotiated with a John Murray Ander-

son literalness, wherein various figures out of the past appear to the strains of soft, off-stage music. He builds up laughs in the most conventional manner, as in the instance of having the Smallwoods relate the objects they have successively run over with their motor-car. He seeks to bag an easy sympathy by making his two leading male characters victims of the War for Humanity. His conception of fairy-like atmosphere is to have a dozen or more little blue electric lights flicker fitfully from different parts of the stage. . . .

I once gained a reputation for ill-mannered criticism by defining a measure of Barrie's work as sugar out-manoeuvring diabetes. Were I presently not a critic of extremely urbane manners, I should define this work of Pinero's as the attempted out-manoeuvring of Barrie by a diabetic Eleanor H. Porter. It is sugar confounding sugar. It is the play of an old man trying vainly, if at times charmingly, to be young. It has its moments, but they are swallowed up in its hours. Miss Katharine Cornell continues to prove her considerable talents in the role of the homely young woman whom love makes beautiful, and Noel Tearle is similarly interesting as the wreck of a man to whom love brings back strength and glamour. The Brady production, like that of his "The World We Live In," is still another vindication of destructive criticism. After suffering pages upon pages of such destructive criticism in the matter of his exhibitions, Mr. Brady has constructively converted himself into a tasteful and attractive producer.

## II

Mrs. Fiske, far-famed as the most intellectual actress on the American stage, continues to produce herself in utterly worthless plays the utter worthlessness of which she continues in a measure artfully to conceal from her audiences by speaking in a voice

so low and with an articulation so indistinct that it is quite impossible to make head or tail out of the proceedings. It is doubtless this sagacity and shrewd showmanship on Mrs. Fiske's part that has earned her her enviable intellectual *kudos*, since were she ever to forget herself for a few moments and speak clearly and intelligibly—as some unintellectual colleague such as, say, Jane Cowl, speaks—and so let the public onto the nature of the plays in which she appears and to which she lends her intellectual imprimatur, it is reasonably certain that her fine scholarly reputation would be snatched from her brow and promptly passed on to Faïre Binney.

It is the easiest thing in the world to gain a reputation for wisdom if one confines one's self to the company of, and association with, half-wits. One's eminence, paraphrasing Mill, is thus solely due to the flatness of the surrounding heads. Mrs. Fiske has satisfied herself very beautifully by following this stratagem. For so many years now that it is difficult to remember, she has carefully and painstakingly picked out for herself plays of a thorough and encompassing insignificance and has then achieved for herself a specious significance by showing her audiences that her talents are superior to the inferior material which engages them. This inferior material Mrs. Fiske selects with all the long planning and solicitude that some other actress spends in search of worthy material. Its inferiority—and particularly the negligibility of her own roles therein—must be so unmistakable and so emphatic that it offers absolutely no resistance to her and thus synchronously offers her the opportunity to convince her audiences, by implication, that she is a much greater actress than she is and that they believe she is. It is a pitiable spectacle. Year in and year out we see her reciting lines the dulness of which she has deliberately contracted

for and with infinite, childish relish and warm self-congratulation triumphing over them with an ironic chuckle. Where William Gillette used to achieve a similar self-congratulatory effect by having all the other actors yell their heads off while he himself spoke in a suavely elegant *pianissimo*, Mrs. Fiske has written for her, with much diligence and precision, dialogue of the most sophomoric cut and then passes herself off as a critical intelligence by smiling condescendingly when she speaks it. But there must still be no slip-up. In order to suggest doubly to the audiences the enormous talents she has in reserve, she surrounds herself with plainly incompetent actors and craftily acts, as the saying is, under them. Far too clever a woman to act up to them, easily show them up for the lugubrious hams they are and thus gain nothing for herself but the reputation for being comparatively a good actress in a company of very bad actors, she astutely gains for herself the reputation of being a good actress who might easily be a great one if only her supporting company had enough skill to play up to her, give her some help and so afford her an opportunity to let herself out. She is the Mrs. Coué of our dramatic stage, past mistress of the principle of histrionic suggestion. If she is not a great actress she is at least great in suggesting that she is one. Her method is wily, admirably planned, and certainly it works. For one person who penetrates the quackery, there are five hundred who swallow the sugar pill and beam their bravas.

The latest vehicle that Mrs. Fiske has had confected for the deft concealment of her widely admired shortcomings is the work of Lillian Barrett and bears the title, "The Dice of the Gods." Dealing with some such set of folk as Maugham disclosed in his "Our Betters," but with none of Maugham's skill, it presents itself as a muddled, stagey and generally preposterous composition

descending at times—as in the second act love scene—to unintentional burlesque. It is strictly obedient to the rules of the tawdry theatre in its sudden thunderstorm to heighten a dramatic effect, in its hurdy-gurdy that grinds out a gay tune in the street below as a sardonic accompaniment to the heroine's woes, in its jollity and laughter of passing micarême revelers while tragedy occupies the immediate foreground, in its heroine's solicitude for a wounded little animal by way of establishing her innate goodness of heart, and in other such banalities as these may connote. The production is so dubious that one is led to speculate whether "Mrs. Baird's Newport villa," the scene of the first act, is meant to be the Newport of Rhode Island or the Newport of Arkansas. I apologize: the sentence is an effort at cheap smart-aleck criticism. The Newport is unmistakably that of Arkansas. All this is something of a surprise when one appreciates that the staging is that of Harrison Grey Fiske, once so immaculate and adept a producer. What has been happening to him these late years?

### III

I have enjoyed some very juicy evenings in the theatre this season, but none more than that provided by Mercedes de Acosta's "Sandro Botticelli." This, indeed, was rich stuff, a plate for gourmets of jocosity in its higher flavors. Set forth as poetic drama, its only remote relationship with poetry lay in the presence in the cast of a daughter of the poet, Richard Le Gallienne. Set forth as drama, its only suggestion of drama lay in the circumstance that it was done on a stage and that two ushers passed icewater around during the intermissions. It was otherwise less a poetical dramatization of the romance of Botticelli and Simonetta Vespucci than a dramatization, and an illuminating one, of what happens

when a well-to-do amateur lady versifier decides that she won't buy a new fur coat this season but will use the money instead to put on her effort in the way of dramatic composition. Let me describe literally this particular versifier's substitute for the fur coat. I use the present tense:

The scene is a *répétition générale* in the Provincetown Theatre down in Macdougall Street. The auditorium is filled with the friends of the lady, aflounce and aflutter in finery customarily reserved for the Mountbattens and other such visiting royal slummers. The humble proscenium that in the past has served but to frame the work of inferior talents like Eugene O'Neill's, Theodore Dreiser's and Susan Glaspell's, has been dolled up with elegant Florentine designs by the lady's husband, Mr. Abram Poole. There is a buzz of conversation on Pierre's restaurant, Mah Jong, the putting on of a new train to Southampton, the way the Montaigne boys are passing the time in that awful jail, the latest masterpiece by Robert W. Chambers, and the way Prince Alexander of Greece brushes his hair—and the curtain goes up. The scene is the Orangerie at the Hotel Astor, designated on the program as "the garden of Lorenzo dei Medici, Florence, Italy." Various actors, got up in pink and purple tights and to their very evident self-consciousness and embarrassment magnificently labeled Leonardo da Vinci, Leo Batista Alberti, Fra Filippo Lippi, Giuliano dei Medici and the like, posture in the foreground and proceed to spend their names. After fifteen minutes of high talk anent Beauty, the entrance of Simonetta is prepared for with a deafening barrage of similes comparing her with the moon, the stars, the inside of a sea-shell, the bridal blush of virgin ivory, the woodland pools at midnight, the seduction of a rose by the morning dew, the quivering, sensitive loveliness of a wounded canary bird imbedded in topaz music, a gos-

samer cloud pierced by the maroon afternoon sun, the tremulous ecstasy of perfume aflame with passion, and the cruel, mordant glory of a broken-hearted *marinierte* herring. The audience ceases for the moment its whisperings about the Ritz Crystal Room, the coming back into favor of the tango and the scandal concerning Mrs. So-and-So at Palm Beach and breathlessly awaits the amazing one's appearance. Music off, and enter an actress who suggests very much less the moon, the stars and the quivering, sensitive loveliness of a wounded canary bird imbedded in topaz music than a good, healthy Vassar basketball player with an excellent appetite for Reuben's sandwiches. And on her heels enter Basil Sydney Botticelli. After a full minute's graceful posing against the backdrop, and after permitting the lovely picture duly to sink in, this Botticelli narrows his eyes and gives Simonetta a hard love-look. Simonetta, the proud, she who has been vainly wooed by all the great Pol dei Rogers, Pommery da Secs and Fra Perrier Jouet Bruts in Italy, is vanquished instanter. "I will come to thee on the morrow," she says. "And under my cloak, I shall be (*tense pause*) nude!" Curtain.

The next scene is the morrow and here, sure enough and true to her word, is the lady wrapped in a red velvet portière. "Oh, how I love thee!" breathes Basil Botticelli, seizing her to his bosom. "Youth is in the air; your body intoxicates me; I am mad with desire!" The lady says fine, she will now take her clothes off. A painful hush spreads over the folks out front, and John Corbin quickly cleans his eye-glasses. The lady then climbs upon a box behind an enormous and conveniently placed chair, strikes a defiant pose, and drops the portière, completely baring to the audience her left arm. There is a gasp from Botticelli, who, like the audience, had been led to expect the whole ziegfeld. "Wonderful!" he ex-

claims, hiding his disappointment; "I will paint you!" Whereupon the lady, outraged at the fellow's physical imperviousness to the charms of her anatomy, again covers her bare arm and stamps out of the studio. And in the next act, she gets her feet wet in a terrible off-stage storm and dies. "Something beautiful must die," says the actor playing Botticelli, somewhat irrelevantly pointing to a copy of Botticelli's "Birth of Venus," by Abram Poole, "that something more beautiful may live!"

The naïve Miss de Acosta doubtless hoped to pop her audiences, everything else failing, with the disrobing scene, but she was some years too late. Even had Miss Le Gallienne exposed something more than her left arm, even had she, in fact, displayed herself in what is known in American as the whole tout ensemble, I seriously doubt that there would have been any perceptible reaction. There was a time when Virginia Harned's mere bare feet in "Trilby" provided a nine days' sensation, but since that time our audiences have seen so many of our actresses, musical comedy and dramatic, in the altogether, or very nearly so, that they are today considerably less electrified by nudity than by elaborate and expensive costumes. Miss de Acosta is thus, as a theatrical intelligence, some seven or eight years behind the "Follies." As a dramatic poet, she is not in sight of the caboose at all.

#### IV

"If Winter Comes," a dramatization of Hutchinson's best seller by the author in collaboration with Basil Macdonald Hastings, is a melodrama of the "Hazel Kirke" vintage with nothing in it from beginning to end. I have not read the novel and hence cannot report personally upon the play's obedience to it, but one of the ushers has informed me that the play is a good dramatization of all the bad things in the book. Whether it is a

good dramatization, as the usher says, or not, it surely is a very poor play: as obvious in its characterizations, save in the instance of Sabre's wife, as so many Balieff wooden soldiers, and as patent in plan and theme as the ten-cent treatises on the science of the horoscope. The curtains fall on carefully held tableaux such as in the old days gladdened drama of "The Village Postmaster" and "The County Fair" type; the comic servants are again to the fore; the seduced village girl and her illegitimate babe are rescued from the cold by the charitable and kindly hero; the villain with the black hair streaked with talcum powder alternately snickers and growls himself in and out of the action; the fire-place bathes the stage in so vivid a glow of crimson that the actors take on the aspect of so many Harvard football players; there is the courtroom scene wherein the grief-stricken father of the unfortunate girl tremblingly points an accusing finger at the hero and proclaims him his daughter's seducer, with the attendant jumping up of the hero, fists clenched; there is the hero's love for Lady Tybar, nobly suppressed and borne in silent ache these many, many years; there is the comic doll which the hero brings home for the little one and which he plays with to his own lovable, boyish amusement; there is the scapegrace son; there is the comic unpacking of a bag and the throwing about the room of the ill-assorted contents. And there are any number of other such ingredients. Cyril Maude is the Mark Sabre of the occasion. He works like a steam pile-driver but is poorly suited to the role. Mabel Terry-Lewis is excellent as his wife, and the attractive Peggy Rush is a satisfactory Effie Bright.

## V

Salisbury Field's "Zander the Great" is still another of the locally hailed masterpieces that impresses me as the

ordinary stuff. Viewing it with the most sympathetic eye, I can detect nothing in it but the stereotyped hokums of commerce. Field has been known to write in a light and gracefully witty manner, but the lightness and graceful wit are not visible to any perceptible degree in this composition. The humor slants away from light comedy in the direction of the vaudeville stage; the situations have no novelty; and the characterizations, much lauded by the gentlemen of the daily journals, seem to me to be less characterizations of actual human beings than of actors in the roles of human beings. The fable is aimed straight at the boob tear-ducts and the critical eulogies which the play has received from the press would indicate that the aim has been exact. This fable is of a girl rescued from an orphans' home by a kindly old woman who, by way of returning the favor, rescues the woman's little child from a similar fate upon its mother's death. With the blond-haired little darling, she bravely starts out to find the father who deserted mother and babe these many years ago. There follows a copious dose of sentimental whim-wham composed of such tearful chemicals as the perennial scenes wherein the sweet child reduces a gruff old man to tenderness; wherein the love of the mother-girl for the child brings her to battle tigerishly against the man who would take it from her; wherein the girl, upon being driven into a corner by the villain, shoots him in the hand and then, her femininity overcoming her at the sight of what she has done, faints; and wherein the child knows instinctively that the man who pretends to be its father is really not its father.

All such lovelinesses and the manner in which the present playwright has embroidered them are hardly to my low and evil tastes. Field cracks a very fair joke or two during the course of his play, but that somehow doesn't seem to be quite enough to satisfy me. His work in the main is conventionally done and the result is a piece of Broadway trade goods. Miss Alice Brady is mod-

erately effective in the leading woman's role, but suffers a deal either from a too "punchy" direction or from a personal tendency to overplay. Which it is, I cannot make out. She is a resourceful young actress, however, and is worth some director's careful attention. Jerome Patrick, as the handsome hero, acts throughout the evening for all the world as if he were constantly surveying himself, and not without vast relish, in some invisible pier glass. The fellow provides a magnificently humorous spectacle. Shirt open at the neck with face and throat prettily smeared with sunburn makeup and khaki ranchman's breeches romantically sprinkled with the talcum powder of much mythical rough riding, he poses himself in various elegant *matinée* attitudes, sticking out his chest like a Swoboda, drooping his eyelids languorously and passionately, and adjusting himself meticulously so the spotlight may best catch and reflect, for the edification of the girls out front, the vaseline glammers of his curly hair. Joseph Allen, the George M. Cohan comedian, is amusing in a minor role.

## VI

Since I entertain a certain measure of respect for Andreyev's familiar play, "Anathema," I should like to pretend that it constitutes an interesting evening in the theatre, but I can't. While, quite true, it is the sort of drama that makes a very profound impression upon Drama Leaguers, East Side culture shoppers, super-literary dramatic critics and others who believe that a play is great in the degree that it is theatrically boresome, it simply tortures the rest of us who regard the stage less as an hypodermic syringe for the painful injection of pseudo-metaphysical and philosophical dolours than as a funnel for the inspiring pleasures to be derived from unpretentious and persuasive beauty. It is another of those partly meritorious Russian novels arbitrarily thrown back of the footlights and told to conduct itself as if it were a play. It is lethargic, repetitious; it lacks dramatic flu-

idity; it arrives finally at its destination with shoes worn completely to holes.

The theme you know. Anathema, spirit of doubt, challenge and evil, seeks the truth of God's grace and of man's destiny. His search, through the medium of a humble patriarch who is put to death by the very persons who have profited by his bounty, is baffled, vain. What is the answer to the eternal riddle? The answer is that there is no answer. This theme Andreyev has handled in terms of "Faust" rewritten by a Bolshevik Dunsany, with none of Dunsany's fertile fancy and none of Dunsany's penetrating ironic humor. The play is profoundly imagined and superficially executed. It contains several excellent passages of dramatic writing and one or two dramatic situations, but these are separated by long arid stretches of unimaginative desert land. The manuscript, as a thing of the theatre, does not move. It halts on every corner to scowl and make speeches. Among the Russians who come to mind as perhaps most aptly suited to the dramatization of Andreyev's theme is Lermontov—he possesses the very qualities that the play presently is deficient in: the quality of mystic fancy, the quality of dramatically round-about yet theatrically direct suggestion, and the quality of poetic semi-realism. Andreyev has written his play with indignation; it would be a more convincing play, I daresay, if written with something of an amiable snicker. Lermontov, like Sologub, is not without that snicker. And then this there is nothing more valuable dramatically, as Shakespeare even in his great tragic moments knew.

Maurice Swartz has the role of David whom Anathema uses as his instrument to test the divine Sphinx. He is an actor of the utmost literality. Ernest Glendinning speaks the lines of Anathema clearly and eloquently, as if he were giving a reading of the part at Town Hall, but does not act the role. The scenery, designed by a gentleman whose name I can't recall, harks back to the days of the Hanlons.

# Notices of Books

By *H. L. Mencken*

## I

### *On the Mourners' Bench.*

**T**HERE is this to be said for Giovanni Papini, the Italian ex-intellectual whose "Life of Christ" has just been done into English by Dorothy Canfield Fisher (*Harcourt*): that when he decided to give up his evil courses and go over to Holy Church he indulged himself in no vain coughs behind the hand, but yielded himself to Divine Revelation whole-heartedly, and, as it were, went the whole hog. What he preaches in his book is thus happily devoid of the sophistries with which educated men of a pious turn commonly dodge the difficulties of the Gospel narrative, considered as sober history: for example, the discrepancy between the two accounts of the paternity of Jesus. For Papini, in the heat of his new faith, such difficulties simply do not exist. Far from trying to evade a square facing of what, to sinful eyes, has a tinge of the improbable in it, and even of the nonsensical, he seeks it out deliberately and embraces it with ecstatic gusto. The harder it is to believe, indeed, the more eager he seems to be to believe it. At the precise places where even the most passionate professor of Christian apologetics is apt to retire behind metaphysics, curses upon the Turk and well-deserved praises of Martin Luther, John Wesley or St. Francis Loyola, as the case may be, this former ambassador of Nietzsche to the Quirinal is most abject in his acceptance of the orthodox doctrine. It is precisely as if Dr. Lewellys F. Barker, suddenly abjuring the pathology

136

and therapeutics of Pasteur, Ehrlich and Johannes Müller, should not only go over to osteopathy, but proceed headlong to chiropractic, Christian Science and Peruna, and finally send out circulars announcing his entry into practise as a specialist in the madstone, the rheumatism string and the spondylotherapy of Dr. Albert Abrams. I doubt that the world has ever seen a more thorough-going conversion of a literate man. Theology, in late years, has been growing increasingly politic and compromising. I have read doctrinal books by bishops that left little of orthodox Christianity save the music and the collection. But in Papini's tome we are once more in the more innocent and charming atmosphere of the Middle Ages. To him even those Methodists who, sworn to Prohibition, have to explain away the miracle at Cana are simply "Voltairean swine."

Ah, that so devout and earnest a book were more ingratiating! Ah, in particular, that it showed a bit more of the Christian humility and charity which, according to the author's preface, he hopes it will restore to the world! But the sober fact is that Papini, like practically all Christians of robust faith, is chiefly marked by an almost complete lack of the virtues preached by that faith's Founder. His "Voltairean swine" I have just quoted. From end to end of his book there is the same ill-natured, childish and imbecile lambasting of honest doubt. Those who doubt are not only grievously in error; they are also deliberate scoundrels, and deserving of the fire. Here, I often think, is the true tragedy of Jesus:

that it is precisely those who profess to believe in Him most profoundly who show the least influence of His personality and His message. Could one imagine a more colossal failure? If one searches in the world for men who order their relations with their fellow men on the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, who appear ever to have *heard* of the Sermon on the Mount, one finds them only intermittently in Christendom, and nine times out of ten it turns out, on examination, that they are not Christians. Christianity today, indeed, is a sort of wholesale denial of every idea that Jesus gave voice to. It is not poor, but rich and flaunting. It is not meek, but bellicose and tyrannical. It is not humble, but full of a shiny and preposterous pride. It is not merciful, but extraordinarily cruel and malicious. It is not pure in heart, but grasping, cunning and ambitious. It is not for peace, but for war. It does not inculcate love of neighbors, but bitter and relentless hatred of neighbors. The late war did not come upon the world, as sentimentalists try to believe, in spite of Christianity; it came, in large measure, because of Christianity. For years the poison had been working in the Western nations. Generation after generation had been bred to suspicion, aversion, hate. And when the sordid and ignoble struggle began at last, it was precisely the accepted leaders of Christianity, in all the nations engaged, who combatted most frantically every effort to keep it on a plane of civilized decency, and so brought it down to the level of a combat of gorillas. The conduct of Christendom during those years achieved the final murder of Christ. He survives today, not as a living Presence in any church bearing His name, but simply as a vision of perfection to men who reject the barbaric superstitions that hang about Him, but stand silent before the beauty and nobility of His counsel.

Papini's book, in English, runs to 408 pages. It is dull stuff, obvious and hollow stuff, stuff wholly devoid of any intellectual dignity or spiritual force. Far

more persuasive statements of Christian doctrine have been made by believers of vastly inferior equipment; far more sympathetic and comprehending accounts of Christ Himself have been given by professed agnostics. There is something cheap, trivial and disgusting about it—the raucous tone of a convert of inferior mind and more inferior soul, freshly flung upon the mourners' bench. That such puerile drivel should be hailed throughout Christendom as something doing honor to Christ is but one more evidence of the depths to which Christianity has sunk. Christ deserves to have His story told, not by Christians, but by gentlemen.

## II

### *An American Pedagogue.*

WHAT one chiefly gathers from the two immense volumes of Dr. David Starr Jordan's autobiography, "The Days of a Man" (*World Book Co.*), is the impression that the man is immensely industrious and infinitely respectable. It is a tale of herculean and unremitting labors in three widely separated and often antagonistic fields: first, that of a zoölogist specializing in fish; secondly, that of a pedagogue, lieutenant of pedagogues, colonel of pedagogues, and, finally, field marshal of pedagogues; and thirdly, that of a wandering uplifter and one-man chautauquan, chiefly devoted to crusading against war. It is, of course, difficult to mention a professed pacifist today without descending to low and perhaps vulgar jocosity, for there has never been a time in modern history when the cause seemed more hopelessly lost; if anything, indeed, is now plain it is that we have just entered upon a long era of wars, some of them promising to be extraordinarily ferocious. But if the pacifist thus takes on, perforce, something of the aspect of a Seventh Day Adventist rushing into his Sunday clothes to be ready for the Second Coming, or of a Prohibitionist trying to convince himself that New York is actually going dry, there is at least a cer-

tain amelioration of his comicality in the fact that, between 1914 and 1919, it took some courage to maintain his faith—not mere courage in the face of facts, which is common to all right-thinking Americans, but courage in the face of brickbats and jails. This courage Dr. Jordan had when it was needed. On the day that Woodrow, having been re-elected as a pacifist, formally delivered the Republic to the sweating Motherland, Jordan was the star spell-binder at a pacifist mass-meeting in Baltimore, only 40 miles from the national capital. The young bloods of the town, as yet unparalyzed by the draft, undertook to break up the meeting by the devices later popularized by the Department of Justice, and still later by the American Legion and Ku Klux Klan. But the learned doctor bravely stood his ground and had his say, and for that let us honor him, however little we may agree with him.

More, he kept on preaching peace even after Our Boys were in the trenches, albeit in a somewhat *pianissimo* fashion. In his own record of the time I can find no trace of such a *volte face* as that which Upton Sinclair ascribes to Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler in "The Goose Step." But Butler, of course, had a much more difficult situation to face: he had not only the Department of Justice to think of, but also the educational and patriotic theories of Wall Street and the Republican National Committee. Jordan, with a university in Leland Stanford that had been amply endowed by a single profiteer, already happily dead, was under no such fire from the rear, and so he did not have to edit his arguments against butchery. His opposition to the current war and to all war, however, does not appear to have prevented him cherishing correct ideas as to the sinfulness of the public enemy. Unless I read him ineptly, he held that the combat then raging was due to a deliberate attempt by the Germans to conquer and enslave the whole world, and that this attempt was inspired by congenital criminality. Going further, he seems to

have shared the prevailing doctrine that this criminality threw up symptoms in all living Germans, and particularly in all German professors. His discussion of these grave issues, indeed, is marked by all the scientific calm and exactness of the contemporary editorials in the *New York Tribune*. In brief, what he shows is that a man may be a pacifist, and yet an extremely docile and laudable patriot. More than once he pays his eloquent tribute to the delights of democracy. It is, he believes, a noble scheme. Unluckily, he forgets this text now and then, and there are lamentable slips in his argument. In one place, for example, he argues against war on the ground that the Civil War killed off many of the Virginia gentry, and so forced their surviving sisters to marry beneath them, which is to say, among the bourgeoisie. Why this highly democratic miscegenation should be deplored by a sworn democrat is more than I am able to make out.

I suspect that Dr. Jordan's chief interest in life, despite his long service as a university president and his diligent devotion to the uplift, has been his practical work as naturalist, and especially his very valuable investigations of the habits of fishes. One observes him turning to it incessantly, despite the pull of other concerns. The men he mentions most often in his narrative and with most affection are old colleagues and students—*Fischkenner* like himself. He has followed strange fish all over the world, and his contributions to the horribly named science of ichthyology have been numerous and of importance. I doubt that he achieved any good for either himself or the common weal when he began to neglect this science for the higher pedagogy. There is not the slightest reason to believe that Leland Stanford University was needed in California when it was set up there, or that it has cast any appreciable rays of light into the gloom of the native mind. The state, intellectually, is still an utter barbarism—a paradise of movie wenches, New Thoughters, Kiwanis Clubs, crooked state's attorneys

and other such symbols of the New Freedom. Its courts still railroad innocent men to prison. Its mental life is that of small country towns grown into gaudy and degraded cities. It reeks with crazy religions. Not an idea worth hearing ever comes out of it. In this fog, Dr. Jordan has labored for years, vainly trying to set up a new Oxford or Leipzig where the swami rolls his eyes and the movie gal sins with her bootlegger. Meanwhile, multitudes of lovely fish have navigated the remote seas and rivers of the world, waiting in vain for some one to study them, cherish them, and give them Latin names. It seems a waste of a good man. In truth, it always seems a waste of a good man to make an American university president of him.

### III

#### *In the Altogether.*

IF Frank Harris' "My Life and Loves" had the imprint of a regular publisher and were on sale in the book-stores, instead of being privately printed, as it is, I suppose that the smut-snufflers of the Comstock Society would be prosecuting the publisher by now, and that pious Tammany judges would be denouncing it, while the case was still *sub curae*, in the newspapers, and that the newspapers themselves would be wallowing in the scandal, and making sure, as usual, that not a single flapper in any self-respecting finishing-school missed reading the book. Perhaps, indeed, the whole buffoonery will be upon us before these lines get into print, despite the very elaborate efforts that seem to have been made to keep the thing from getting into general circulation. If so, then I can only hope that the porno-maniacs will tell us how any normal man could achieve the task that Harris has set before himself, to wit, that of writing a complete and honest autobiography, without introducing matters of sex into the first volume. This first volume, in the present case, deals with the years before the author came to his majority. They are, as everyone knows,

years of intense sexual curiosity, and, in the healthy male, of outreachings toward sexual experience. The difference between the story that Harris has to tell of them and the story that the ideal American youth of the Y. M. C. A. would have to tell is simply this: that Harris' tale is bare of suppressions, autoerotism and dirty dreams. In truth, a sort of innocence gets into it, even when it is superficially most lubricious, and one cannot escape the notion that, for that certain young man at that certain time, there was a great deal more to be got out of hearkening to the hormones than could ever have been got by hearkening to the counsels of the village pastor. Experience killed curiosity, and the death of curiosity left the mind free for graver concerns. In the midst of proceedings that certainly cannot be reconciled with the formal moral code of Christendom, Harris managed to develop his body to strength and resilience, to acquire habits of thrift and industry, to pack his mind with a vast store of positive knowledge, and to outfit himself with the tastes and ways of thought of a highly civilized man.

Moreover, all this took place in Kansas—surely a miracle, if there ever was one. Born in Ireland, the son of a naval officer of obscure career, Harris escaped to New York as a boy, had some experience there of very severe manual labor, and then somehow made his way to the University of Kansas, at Lawrence, and there fell under the influence of a forgotten but apparently extraordinarily accomplished pedagogue, Prof. Dr. Byron C. Smith. This first volume of his autobiography is, in a large sense, an eloquent and almost impassioned tribute to Smith—a man who seems to have had a truly amazing capacity for awakening intellectual enterprise. He not only set his pupil to devouring the humanities voraciously; he also implanted in him habits of independent thinking—habits that have characterized Harris ever since. The raw material, of course, was there—chiefly Irish facility and Irish bellicosity. But Smith converted what

might have been, after all, no more than a strange, moody cowboy into something of a scholar, more of an artist, and even more of a man of the world. I had never heard of him until I read this volume, but now I can see his tracks all over Harris' later work—over the two volumes of Shakespearean criticism, over the biography of Wilde, and even over the "Contemporary Portraits," though they deal specifically with men met long after Smith's death, of whom, in many cases, he had never heard. It is a genuine pleasure to come upon a record of so talented a schoolmaster. The breed is certainly not notable for professional efficiency. But here is one who found a wild young man in a Kansas village, too much interested, perhaps, in the ladies, and made of him one of the most original, pungent and effective critics of the life of our time.

The work, as planned, will run to seven volumes, and no doubt the later ones will show a greater decorum than this first one. Harris did not stay long in Kansas, or, indeed, in America. He went back to Britain, and presently became an editor of influential newspapers and magazines, and a salient and picturesque figure in the life of London. If he deals as frankly in his subsequent volumes with the men he met and knew there as he here deals with his own youth, he will produce a record of the highest historical value—a record, in fact, that will be singular and invaluable. It is shocking, but there is very little in it that is palpably false. No man, perhaps, will ever write an absolutely exact history of himself, for no man ever quite knows himself. But here Harris shows a promise of coming as near to it as is humanly feasible.

#### IV

##### *Nietzsche in Greenwich Village.*

To what extent, precisely, Maxwell Bodenheimer's novel, "Blackguard" (*Covici-McGee*), is autobiographical I have no means of knowing, but some parts of it, obviously, are echoes of

the author's own experience as a practising poet in a highly bourgeois republic, and other parts sound a great deal like Freudian projections of any young poet's secret aspirations. Poetry, as I have often argued (simply poll-parrotting, of course, though in less decorous terms, Matthew Arnold, Johann Wolfgang Goethe and all the other Old Masters) is no more than an attempt to escape the harsh world of fact by creating a dream world of caressing fancy. The poorer the poet, the more his strophes bristle and glitter with images of diamonds, pearls, rubies, emeralds and other such baubles; the less God pays attention to him in this world, the more certain he is that he will be a distinguished and illustrious figure in the society of Heaven, with the rank of Grand Kleagle at least. Bodenheimer, as everyone with ears must be well aware by this time, is a fellow who believes that his talents and deserts have been underestimated by the American people, and particularly by American editors. Thus it is not surprising to find that the hero of his novel, a scarcely disguised poem in prose, is a great mocker of the stupidity about him, and one who not only floors his poor old father with "hard" words and, in the end, a few wallops with the fist, but also spreads devastation among editors with his scorching epigrams. His career, in brief, is that of a Greenwich Village Nietzsche. He is a Ben Hecht who starts where Ben stops as a scoffer, and avoids entirely Ben's practical concessions to the *mores* of a vulgar people. One could never imagine him paying income tax, or buying jumping-jacks for the children, or being polite to his Aunt Clara, or holding a respectable job on a family newspaper, or traveling about in Pullman cars, all of which Ben has done—and all of which, I daresay, Bodenheimer himself is capable of doing, the flesh being weak. Carl Felman disdains all such puerile surrenders to Mrs. Grundy and the *Polizei*. He is a brigand, a blasphemer, a revolutionist and a love-pirate. He is impolite; he wears dirty shirts; he commits larceny

and adultery. In the end, unable to obtain satisfaction for his anti-social libido by means of the ordinary crimes, he invents a new one that contrives to outrage not only orthodox society but also Greenwich Village itself. That is to say, he enters upon a flaunting liaison with a common prostitute—and then refuses her offer of her person, preferring to pretend sacrilegiously that he is a monk and she a nun. This masterpiece achieved, he passes from the scene.

There is amusement in this chronicle, but only too often, alas, it is at the expense of the author. His style is extremely careful and deliberate, and now and then it is lifted to distinction by genuinely sonorous phrases. But it is but little more adapted to such a story than the style of the late William James would be to a Presidential message. When M. Feltman has at his bewildered mother or at one of his friends among lady magazine editors in the polyphonic prose of Miss Amy Lowell, the effect is simply to squeeze all the blood of life out of him and leave him a dummy worked by a ventriloquist. In the effort to launch his somewhat muddled ideas, indeed, Mr. Bodenheim quite forgets that he is writing a story, and not a manifesto in the *Dial*. He would make better progress in the art of letters, it seems to me, if he could get rid of his delusion of persecution. There is, in point of fact, no ground for his apparent belief that he has been neglected and put upon. On the contrary, his very modest contributions to the beautiful letters of the Republic have been read widely and attentively, and some of his friends have beat the tom-tom for him in a very exhilarating manner. His merit lies in his capacity for making phrases; they are often bold and strange, and sometimes they are beautiful. Some of his short lyrics are certainly not to be sniffed at; they show an honest and exuberant delight in the sheer loveliness of words, rare in a country bound to formal ideas, most of them unsound. His defect lies in the general opaqueness of his thinking—his

pathetic air of not knowing clearly what he is about. When this opaqueness flabbergasts potential customers, he is too prone to take refuge in the Christian Science theory that they are degraded earthworms and incapable of rising to the lofty concerns of the spirit.

Thus "Blackguard," which, as I have said, is a poem in the form of prose, seems confused and ineffective, and, in part, nonsensical. It misses beauty because it is too argumentative and rhetorical; it misses conviction because it lacks fundamental sense and plausibility. That other martyr to stupid publishers and a swinish public, Harry Kemp, made a far better job of it when he tackled prose. His "Tramping on Life" is not only a more coherent and persuasive history than "Blackguard"; it has also made a popular success and earned a lot of money—which, despite their disdain for the bourgeoisie, always seems to be a desideratum that the Villons of the Village cannot quite put out of their minds. Kemp is now touring Spain in his Dodge sedan, lodging at the best hotels and demoralizing the peasantry by throwing away handfuls of coppers. The fact should give his fellow poets something to think about.

## V

### *Books of Inferior Quality.*

MANY fat and appetizing-looking tomes engage my eye, and then drop me down the chute of disappointment. "The Nineteen Hundreds," by Horace Wyndham (*Seltzer*), which is represented on the slip-cover to be a "brilliantly pungent volume" and "a living, breathing picture . . . of the spacious and comfortable London that vanished in 1914," turns out to be a dull, ill-written and extremely stupid volume by a third-rate journalistic hack and theatrical press-agent. Its anecdotes are the most vapid I have ever encountered; some of them are almost idiotic. . . . David Karsner's "Talks With Debs in Terre Haute" (*Call*) is better, if only because of the long chapter detailing Karsner's interview with Debs' sister

in New York—a lady of considerable means, living in an ornate West Side apartment-house, and apparently rather uncertain whether to be proud of her brother or ashamed of him. But Karsner spoils the chapters devoted to Debs' own confidences by making the old fellow talk like a professor of rhetoric in a one-building university. Debs' actual conversation, I wager, is a great deal less stiff and bombastic, and a great deal more amusing. . . . Louise Bryant's "Mirrors of Moscow" (*Seltzer*) is another disappointment. Miss Bryant, who is the widow of John Reed, had exceptional opportunities to get behind the official masks of the chief personages in the international comedy at Moscow, but what she has to tell about them, save in the case of Enver Pasha, is mainly quite conventional and obvious. . . . Nathaniel Wright Stephenson's "Lincoln" (*Bobbs-Merrill*) likewise leaves me hungry. I can find nothing in it that was not known before, nor does the narrative show much novelty of treatment. A workmanlike book, but wholly lacking in force and vividness. . . . Prof. Dr. Irwin Edman's "Human Traits and Their Social Significance" (*Houghton*) is still worse. What the professor sets out to do is to reduce to one volume all that modern psychology has unearthed (and guessed) about the mental processes of man. He covers the ground industriously, but his exposition is painfully dull. Whenever one comes upon a quotation from the late William James, which is fortunately often, one enjoys a sense of breaking out of a fog into the clear yellow sunlight. In brief, the professor is learned, but cannot write. . . . Basil Thomson's "My Experiences at Scotland Yard" (*Doubleday*) also comes a cropper. Like all detectives, Thomson is a great boaster, and full of dark hints about his professional sagacity. But his own evidence shows that most of the spies he took during the war were obviously feeble-minded. The sane ones apparently got away; the really shrewd and effective ones he does not

mention, and probably never heard of. In justice to him, however, it should be said that he is by no means the illiterate ass that his American colleagues are. The latter, when they try to write books at all, have to hire newspaper reporters to do it for them. During the war they arrested and jailed thousands of persons, and yet achieved the almost incredible record of not taking a single actual spy. . . . "Be Your Own Decorator," by Emily Burbank (*Dodd-Mead*), is a mixture of platitude, vagueness and very dubious advice, with the last, perhaps, predominating. Certainly some of the rooms that Miss Burbank shows in her plates are anything but beautiful. There is, indeed, a frightful ugliness in the willow furniture she shows in Plate XVII, and an ugliness scarcely less in her lamps in Plate XX. Her discussion of furniture periods is as superficial and uninforming as that of a high-school teacher haranguing a women's club. . . . "The Religion of Main Street" is a reprint of the sermons with which the Rev. Dr. Percy Stickney Grant lately got himself upon the first pages of the great Christian newspapers of New York, together with the letters exchanged between the rev. gentlemen and the ordinary of the diocese, Mgr. Manning. In such controversies, I hope I need not say, my prejudices are usually on the side of the combatant accused of heresy, but in this case it seems to me that Mgr. Manning got all the better of the row. Dr. Grant's sermons, indeed, are almost incredibly obvious, feeble and ineffective; even when his contention is so sound that only an idiot would challenge it he somehow manages to get banality into it. Mgr. Manning, on the contrary, maintains his preposterous case with clarity and vigor. He is, like all ecclesiastics, a casuist, but he is at least a casuist of some boldness and grace. Dr. Grant merely bandies words. . . . "How to Practice Suggestion and Auto-Suggestion," by Emile Coué (*American Library Service*), is a second dose of balderdash for the American customers of the late visitor.

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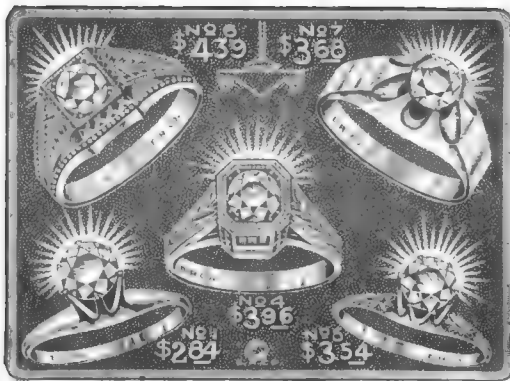
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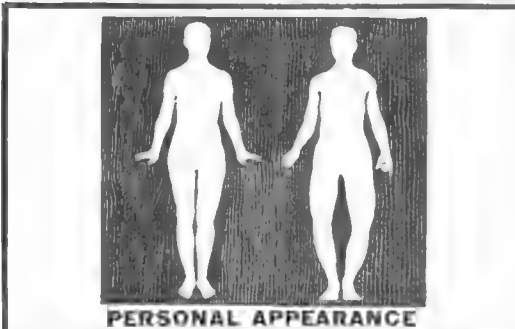
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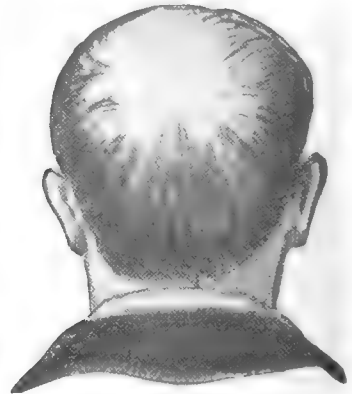
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humanity's immemorial complaint that "spring should vanish with the rose" and the song of youth too soon come to an end. And for centuries before Omar Khayyam wrote his immortal verses, science had searched—and in the centuries that have passed since then has continued to search—without halt, for the fabled "fountain of youth," an infallible method of renewing energy lost or depleted by disease, overwork, worry, excesses or advancing age.

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this respect, recognizing as he does that no marriage can be a truly happy one unless both partners are free to ex-

press the deepest feelings they have for each other without degrading themselves or bringing into the world undesired children.

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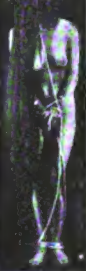


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11



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combed into the hair and almost immediately you can see "listless locks" begin to take on new life, new lustre, new silky sheen—straggly ends and straggly strands melding into glorious waves and curls.



### And in 20 minutes

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Delightful elixir of Spanish herbs makes any hair soft, lustrous and wavy—and keeps it so!

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Venida ClinTonic Twin Soaps are made and guaranteed by the manufacturers of Venida Hair Nets. They are a quality product, and if they do not please you, we will refund your purchase price.

Ask for the "Twin Soaps" wherever Venida Hair Nets are sold. If your dealer cannot supply them, send us 25 cents direct, and we will send you a box parcel post, prepaid.

**2 cakes for 25 cents**

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